Notes on New York, San Francisco and Old Mexico.

NOTES ON NEW YORK, SAN FRANCISCO, AND OLD MEXICO, BY FRANK W. GREEN.

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PREFACE.

“And oftentimes, excusing of a fault, Doth make the fault the worse by the excuse.”

King John.

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NIAGARA.

“What dreadful sound of waters in mine ears.”— King Richard III

ARRIVED at Niagara a few days ago. A welcome relief after New York, that hottest of hot cities, with the thermometer at a hundred in the shade, the nights, if anything, worse than the days. Travelling by the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad, up the magnificent Hudson River, and through the Mohawk Valley, it took only twelve hours to reach the Falls. The trains are very complete, with dining, sleeping, and smoking cars. On this train, as it was limited, there were no ordinary carriages, but 2 on the usual trains there is only one class, and you pay extra to go into the drawing room car. I went into the “smoker” during one part of the journey, and was much amused by the summary method of dealing with those passengers who prefer to travel without going through the ordinary form of buying a ticket. We had got some twenty miles from one of the stations, when the conductor discovered an individual who had evidently spent his all in worshipping Bacchus. He pulled the alarm bell, stopped the train, and ejected this worthy at eleven o'clock at night, in what seemed to be a howling wilderness, where he would have had to spend the rest of the night, only some of us “put up” enough money to pay his fare to his destination. His gratitude knew no bounds, and by way of showing it he pulled out a plug of the blackest tobacco, which he insisted on me chewing! I only escaped by assuring him that I was incapacitated by nature from spitting. I 3 cannot but think that this method was a cheaper and more effectual way than by taking him on to his destination and hauling him before a magistrate and condemning him to pass a week in prison. The man only followed his natural inclination to get to his home, at whatever cost, and as quickly as possible. The conductor was paid to stop him, and he did it; one achieves his object, though at the

loss of his liberty, the other does not. Hence the victory for the authorities on the American plan.

It was too late to see the Falls that night, so I turned in and enjoyed the only sound sleep I had had for three weeks. The thermometer was at seventy; the bedroom door was removed, and a sort of Venetian blind up in its place, and all was cool and quiet. In the morning I tried to make my way to a bath-room, but it was not to be found on my floor. I was directed by a “coloured gentleman” downstairs, where I was told a “lady” would show me around. I think 4 the baths in the hotel are one of the charms of the place. Picture a large room, out of the windows of which you can see the rapids boiling and foaming within six inches of your feet; a large, rough, stone bath, twenty or twenty-five feet long by half as broad, and into the centre of which a torrent of water leaps, a current two or three feet thick, shooting six feet into the bath, and escaping over a dam at the lower end, going into the rapids outside. It certainly was my idea of a morning tub. But the question was how about getting into it. It looked very dark and deep. Supposing I was drawn under that forbidding looking dam into the rapids outside? The honour of England forbade me enquiring the depth of the bath from the “lady” outside. If I splashed a little and pretended I had been in, then I should lose the bath. No; there was nothing to do but to go in carefully, very carefully, toes first. The depth was only four feet! You were spared the 5 announcement “Sad death in a bath of a Wakefield man.” I could just swim against the current, and two iron rings on each side of the torrent enabled me to hold myself against it. It was a rough luxury which few if any hotels can boast. After breakfast the first thing was how to see the Falls. I enquired of one of the colored men, and he said “Walk.” Another colored one said; “No, sar; you gentleman, you drive; this man only one nigger; he understand nothing.” So I thought I would go outside and see for myself. If it was too far I could then return and take a hack. I went down the street, resisting the entreaties of the hack-drivers to take me for three dollars, two dollars, one dollar, even twenty-five cents, sooner than see a gentleman walk, past the spurious Indian stores. Did I want a pair of mocassins? An Indian canoe? An Indian fan? A set of alligator teeth? A

piece of gypsum? No; none of these things tempted me; not even a 6 real pair of snow-shoes (a useful purchase at this time of the year). I could also have had my photograph taken, head washed, been shaved, bought a railway ticket, or a sun-shade, a fancy work-basket, or a ham sandwich. In fact, had you asked the vendors of these articles “Is life worth living?” the answer would have been, “No, certainly not, unless you have a glass of ice-cold lemonade, two photographs (one for yourself and one to send home), an ice-cream, and a camp-stool.” I passed down the street, and made my way to the bridge, to cross the American rapids, and so got on to Goat Island. The river is divided into two parts by this Island, the larger portion passing round on the Canadian side, the smaller, on the side I was, the American side. The Island extends to the brink, and so makes two Falls—the large Horse-shoe Fall and the American Fall. I struck across the Island to see the Horse-shoe Fall first. It is quite impossible to describe the deep impression 7 the first view of the large Fall leaves on one's mind. I have seen the Rhine and other Falls, which, compared to Niagara, are as a jet from a fire-hose to the Calder. It is a terrible sight. To say that it is nearly two hundred feet high, and a quarter of a mile across, and that it is computed that one hundred million tons of water go over that one Fall every hour, can give you no idea of its terrific force. After being tossed by rapids, and turned and racked by rocks for over three miles, falling even then one hundred feet, this enormous body of water falls into a terrific abyss; the foot is enveloped in a vast cloud of spray, dashed up to three times its own height; the edge is a dark green curtain twenty feet thick. It exceeded far away anything I had expected. There is something supernatural about it, and you gaze, fascinated by the awful thunder and terrible plunge that this ocean-like river takes; it can be compared to nothing; it must be seen to be respected.

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Of course, the first thing is to tear around and see everything, so crossing a little iron bridge I stood immediately over where the water curls and takes its headlong plunge. Here you can get some idea of the height; below you can see nothing except spray and mist rising higher and higher, and then the river glides away a lovely emerald colour without

a ripple. I think the colour of the water below the Falls is one of the loveliest sights I ever saw. You can get splendid views of it from all parts of the island, notably from the “Three Sisters,” where there are some small falls of immense force. After this I went and saw the American Falls, which are grand but are smaller and more symmetrical.

Proceeding along the island I next saw what to my mind is the most exciting part of Niagara,—what is called the Cave of the Winds. At a house on the bank you exchange your clothes for a suit of flannels, and if you wish, a waterproof, which is not the least good, and a 9 pair of canvas shoes, or rather sacking tied round your feet to prevent you from slipping; and thus attired, are accompanied by a guide. The man who went with me was a hard-bitten old chap who had been at it five-and-twenty years. You descend a circular stair about ninety feet high, one hundred and fifty steps sheer down, and get on the shelving bank of the river and close under the American Fall. To go into the “Cave of the Winds,” so called on account of the tremendous gusts, you must pass between the back of the fall and the rock; you only really pass behind one-fifth of the Fall, which is quite as much as you want. One cannot adequately describe the deafening roar. The only thing in miniature is the grinding of a flourmill intensified a thousand times. Suddenly you descend a wooden stairs, and you are drenched to the skin, and can neither see the guide nor anything else. A terrific volume of spray strikes you in the face, and you think you 10 are going to be swept away; you can hardly breathe, such is the terrible commotion behind these waters. You stagger after the guide, who has disappeared in a sheet of water, scramble over rocks, almost beaten back at times, and at last turn to the left, passing through a crack in the falling water curtain. You then get round in front at the foot of the Fall, and endeavour to get a glimpse of the plunging torrent of water two hundred feet above you. Occasionally you see it, and when you do, it is a sight most magnificent; you pass at the foot and in front of the Fall, despite the driving hurricane of wind and water, and cross the boulders by means of frail wooden bridges, at last getting back again, after a quarter of an hour's pitiless drenching and excitement. The whole scene is grand, and the rainbows, which form a complete circle, are exceedingly beautiful. Some ladies go through

it, which says a good deal for their courage, as a number of the opposite sex will not face it. 11 This is at the back of the smaller Fall.

I then crossed to the Canadian side, and went up in a small steamer called the “Maid of the Mist” to the foot of the large Fall. This, too, is certainly one of the most sublime sights. You steam right up to the foot of the big Fall, and such is the enormous mass of water dashing down from it that you cannot really describe it. Of course you are drenched again here. A former steamer being unprofitable was run from the Fall down through the dreadful “Whirlpool” rapids to the take below. These rapids here race thirty miles an hour, and dash over the rocks thirty and forty feet high. It was through this that poor Captain Webb tried to swim, losing his life in the attempt. It certainly was the maddest freak ever conceived by man, and it is a marvel he got as far as he did alive. A Frenchman advertised a similar attempt, but finding it too cold, or a shower of rain coming on, prevented him taking the water. Froggy 12 walked off with Uncle Sam's dollars in his pocket, which only goes to show how well they manage these things in France. I am afraid I have only given but a poor idea of Niagara,—at least of the force of the water. To help you a little, you might remember that the lakes and rivers supplying Niagara cover one hundred and fifty thousand square miles, and the land drained by them some five hundred thousand.

The next day I went to see the Whirlpool, which is very beautiful, but some of the prettiest scenery in America is spoilt by rock-advertising. It may be invaluable to the invalid in search of health to know that “Dr. Pierce's Patent Pleasant Purgative Pellets are the safest and surest medicine, &c.,” or to the man in search of domestic reform to learn that “Robinson's Insecticide is certain death to the New Jersey bed-bug;” but this useful information is lost to the lover of nature, and succeeds in completely spoiling the effect of the scene. Subsequently 13 I visited the neighbouring tribe of Tuscarora Indians. After a beautiful drive of some eight miles I arrived at their church, which is presided over by an Indian. On the way we met a waggon-load of them going to fish for sturgeon in the rapids below the Falls. They kill them with a three-pronged spear. Their hunting is done away with, and they are usually indolent, preferring to fish and lie about. The church is

a small white building on a plateau, commanding a view of the Genesee country, all fruit and corn, with a stretch of the emerald-coloured river tumbling between its steep banks and the deep blue of Lake Ontario in the distance. It certainly equalled anything I had seen in Switzerland. In a few minutes Mr. Mount-pleasant, chief of all the Tuscaroras, drove up. He claims English descent, but I do not know how he works this in with being an Indian chief; he looks more like the Prefect of a French town. He hitched his horse to a tree, and secreted a 14 cigar stump on a ledge of the porch. Preparatory to going into the “meeting,” I had a few words with him. He informed me there were about two hundred Indians on the reservation, which is about seven thousand acres in extent. He settled all civil disputes, but they were, he said, very quiet except when they got any “fire-water.” The majority of those I saw bore plainly the stamp of the North American Indian; the squaws do most of the work. The tribe is fast dying out. What will become of the land? Will they have a Great Tontine? If so, the last survivor will have a nice property. I went into the church with him. The proceedings, to say the least, were certainly conducted in a most irregular manner. The congregation consisted of about ten, two old squaws, two Indian lads, and the rest appeared to be choir. One lad studied the index of his hymn-book; the other was reading—I should not like to say a comic, but certainly an 15 illustrated paper. After playing the organ a short time, the lady in charge of the choir suggested that they should sing a hymn, and this meeting with no opposition from the congregation, with the exception of the two youths, who left the church to lay down in the sun outside, they began to sing what appeared a hymn from Moody and Sankey's collection. Shortly afterwards an Indian minister addressed them in their own tongue, and I left, not very much impressed. The hack-driver suggested that I should give a trifling donation to the chief, but I thought it would spoil all my ideas of Indian chiefs by offering him fifty cents. Subsequently I purchased some of the squaws' work, which was rather clever. On the way back I called at the farm house and had a glass of cider. It was owned by a German family. They came over here forty years ago without a penny, and are now landed proprietors, living happily on their savings, and free from fear of 16 Mr. Chamberlain robbing them of

their hardearned dollars. I thus finished a very enjoyable trip, and will try and send you anything of further interest I see.

17

NEW YORK TO THE GOLDEN GATE.

Ah! world unknown! how charming is thy view, Thy pleasures many, and each pleasure new: Ah! world experienced! what of thee is old? How few thy pleasures, and those few how old!

Crabbe.

IN TRAVELLING across America and seeing a few of its wonders, the idea struck me that a slight description, however badly put together, would amuse some of those at home, who in all probability would never have an opportunity of seeing them for themselveS; therefore they must, in reading this letter, remember that it is only a letter. The writer 18 is not gifted Ouida's pen in describing scenery, or George Augustus Sala's skill in making it chatty and amusing. It is an endeavor to give a slight—a very slight—idea of what can be seen in travelling. I think I told you in a previous letter about the wonders of Niagara. Not to see Niagara by moonlight is not to see it at all, so when I found myself on a Saturday night at Cleveland, Ohio, I determined to run over and see it once again, especially as Cleveland is not an interesting place. It has a few specialities. It is not unlike its namesake in the old country, inasmuch as it is the centre of the great iron industry of America. It has likewise its strikes. Its walls are covered with the striking announcement that “Citizen So-and-so will address the patriotic sons of So-and-so. Come in your thousands, and assault with rifle, torch, and dynamite! Vive la drapeau Rouge!” etc. This last motto must have been a little confusing to some of the untutored sons of 19 freedom. It is in this matter of Socialism that I think Uncle Sam beats us; he ignores it. The banker and the landowner no not quake in their shoes. The Socialist is laughed at the Polls; treated as a “crank;” off his head—in fact, he is not put into such a position of notoriety that he can hold a mass

meeting at twenty-five cents a head, a few reserved seats at a dollar, and then retire to a snug retreat in the suburb. He may go out into the street and proclaim the President of the Republic to be a blackguard, liar, and thief, and no one would care a red cent. Cleveland also resembles its namesake, as it is fond of horseflesh, and has one of the finest trotting tracks in the States; the tracks here are gravel, not turf. The celebrated Maud S. “lowered the record” from 29¼ to 28¾ for trotting a mile just a few days after I left. Jay-Eye-See, and other celebrated trotters, live here, and it is a sporting place generally.

20

It differs from Middlesboro', as it possesses the finest Avenue in the States,—it is, I believe, thirteen miles long and broad in proportion—but even this did not prove a strong enough attraction to stay Sunday over, so I made up my mind to go again to Niagara. I did not regret it, as by moonlight it is worth travelling fifty times as far to see, and to stand on the suspension bridge below the Falls at night and watch the water below you defies description.

Below Niagara the river rushes between high banks for some fifteen miles, and flows into Lake Ontario. You take the train down for some ten miles and then meet the boat from Toronto, which takes passengers on board and then returns. Just before you enter the town you pass Hanlan's Island, called after the great Canadian Sculler.

Toronto was in a state of the utmost excitement in consequence of the return of the expedition against Riel the half-breed, and his 21 ally Big Bear the “Indian;” the expedition consisted almost of volunteers taken from the desk and store, and as little accustomed to long walks on empty stomachs as our own volunteers are. They deserved, and I must say received, the utmost credit for their arduous and difficult campaign. They marched and fought for the greater part in an unknown country against a cunning and ferocious enemy, and beat him all ends up. It only shows what volunteers can do, and I think that expedition ought to be of the greatest use in stimulating our own force, as we never know when and

for how long we may need the services of those men who so patriotically and generously give up their scanty leisure hours to learn a little soldiering.

The town was profusely decorated with triumphal arches, flags, and all sorts of mottoes. One in particular was very touching—“Welcome home, dear brother, to your own fireside.” But it had its dark side. Some were in mourning, 22 though I am glad to say the death-roll was very small; but in a small community it was felt severely.

I was fortunate enough to meet some of the staff officers, who gave me a very good account of the campaign; they were loaded with booty, rifles, mocassins, beaded tobacco pouches, snow shoes, and cases of furs. We travelled together on the cars to Knighton, to take the boat down the “Mighty St. Lawrence,” and as “firewater” formed a part of the booty, and three warriors had not tasted any for some six months, the noise was considerable, and to add to this, we struck a skunk, and anyone who has read the domestic history of this wonderful animal must know that an artificial manure works or an old bone store is a trifle to it. We got on the boat about four in the morning, and saw one of the prettiest pieces of scenery in America—the sun rising on the St. Lawrence and the thousand isles; these innumerable (I 23 think there are about sixteen hundred of them in all) isles are certainly very pretty: they vary from a rock with a tree on it to a large island some miles long. It takes three or four hours to get through them, and then everyone is on the look-out for “shooting” the rapids. The first rapid looks about a quarter of a mile long; white foaming water rushing along about thirty miles an hour. But the most exciting one is the Lachine rapid, a few miles above Montreal. There is certainly an element of danger, and you could step off the boat on to the rocks as you rush past them. An Indian, represented in war paint in the guide book, but in reality a very greasy looking individual, steers the boat; he has done it over forty years and never had an accident. I had intended to have “shot” it in a canoe; it is often done, but unfortunately had no time. We passed subsequently under a very fine bridge two miles long, and arrived, after a fourteen hours' trip, at Montreal, one of the 24 nicest old towns I have ever been in. About the best thing to do at Montreal is to take a carriage and drive up Mount Royal at the back of the town.

On the way up you pass the “tobogganing” ground, and when you reach the top you are rewarded by one of the prettiest scenes you can imagine: right over the town of Montreal, over the river St. Lawrence, you can look clear over the country for miles.

On the way down you pass through a rather rare thing—a really picturesque cemetery. The tombstones, just peeping out of the long grass, made it seem the ideal of a last resting place.

Montreal is the head-quarters of the Canadian fur trade, and we spent some time in looking through the large store of silver fox, sable, wolverine, beaver, sea otter, buffalo, musk-ox, oppossum, and other furs and robes. We learnt that silver fox and sea otter were the 25 most expensive and most sought after; the once fashionable sable having decreased tremendously in value. Our old friend the skunk is here dressed up and re-christened Alaska Sable, and his skin is sold mostly to make up those short capes that are so much worn in England. The sea otter and silver fox were quite lovely, being deep black, fur with silver points; they cost as much as twenty-five to thirty-five dollars for a very small skin. Every one wears furs of some sort in Montreal in the winter, either good or bad. The usual kit is two robes and a coat or a set of four for a buggy, two being of beaver and the more lasting kind for the servant. Of course the great thing is to get furs nice to look at; but light as well as warm. There were some grand specimens of grizzly and polar bear.

There is a heavy import duty on furs from Canada into the States, so much so that it is cheaper to pay a man's fare to New York than pay the duty. Of course he wears the furs and 26 is not taxed. This may not be strictly honest, but is what is generally done.

Leaving Montreal at night, we passed on our way to New York some lovely lakes, amongst them being Lake George. The moonlight and its shadows on the smooth waters of the lake, and its banks clothed with dark-looking foliage down to the edge, was very effective.

Before taking you from New York a second time, I should like to give you some idea of the American hotels. First I would have you bear in mind that many American families

make an hotel their home; this may in some way account for their general excellence. Also, as of course with almost all their institutions, they have had the benefit of European successes and failures to guide them, but whichever way you try to account for it, they certainly have succeeded in placing themselves far away first as hotel keepers. In a modern first-class hotel you will find on the 27 ground floor a large hall; at one end is the office where you register your name, get your letters, etc. It is not an inconvenient little place, half living room, half bar, but such an office as you see at a first-rate bank; here you can get all information as to trains, etc.; you also state whether you wish to live at so much a day, all included, or onlytake a room and have your meals at the restaurant. I dislike the American plan of feeding you for so much a day very much—if you miss a meal you must pay for it all the same. My idea of living is to order what you want at what time you like; the American plan is to eat what the cook sees fit, at his time, but in all or nearly all the best hotels, you can live either European or American—which you like.

But to return to the equipment of the house. In another portion of the hall is a news-stand, bookstall, stamps, &c.; in a third place you find barbers' shops, Turkish and medical baths, telegraph office for the States or Europe, 28 cigar store, hat and hosiery store, clothes cleaner, and a variety of conveniences depending on the liberality of the house; and last, but by no manner of means least, comes that great American institution, the bar. Most of the bars are gorgeously, and in many cases tastefully, decorated. Here you can get almost any drink, in the shape of a cock-tail, you can think of, but the list of over three hundred names that you see ornamenting some of the so-called American bars in England is for the greater part made up. The most general drinks are claret or whiskey punches, mint juleps, whiskey, and cobblers, but by far the most popular drink, more especially “out West,” is the sweetly simple whiskey straight, “Old Bourbon.” This is also called “one hundred yard” (killing you in that time) or Tarantula juice.

I cannot quit the subject of bars without describing you the one at Hoffmann House. The actual counter forms a circle in the centre; on 29 the walls are hung costly pictures by celebrated artists, more fitted for the Paris salon than anywhere else, usually of the

Nana type, notably beautiful pieces by Bougeran, some of them costing as much as forty thousand dollars, also bits “Etienne;” a specimen of Corregio's inimitable work; tapestries that adorned the vestibules of the third Napoleon, Flemish tapestries of the xvii. century, one or two pictures by English Masters, whilst marble statues, modern and antique bronzes, stand round the room. Small parti-coloured lamps light this costly shrine to Bacchus, and you can feast the eye with real art at the same time as you feast the stomach with real Stilton, lobsters on ice, little neck clam, oysters, and any little delicacy you may fancy, whilst for drink you can get anything, from a glass of sarsaparilla or buttermilk for twenty-five cents, to champagne and claret at fourteen dollars a bottle. Before quitting the liquor question I should just like to say that 30 prohibition of liquor in Maine, Kansas, and Iowa States has proved an almost entire failure; in. many towns the saloons are publicly open, whilst in others it is always perfectly easy to obtain liquor if you only “know the ropes.” To. return to hotels, you find on the first floor elegant suites of rooms, as a rule beautifully furnished; every precaution is taken against fire,—outside ladders at the end of every corridor and red lamps placed that show their position through the smoke; whilst electric fire alarms give the alarm to the night porter. As for prices, at the first-class hotels they are very high; at medium houses it costs from three to four dollars a day, including all charges. What appears to me to be a paltry charge is fivepence for blacking your boots each day. They are generally blacked on your feet in the hall in the morning. And now a few words as to food. The above remarks as to excellence applies only to the leading houses in large cities; otherwise 31 they are often dirty and far too ambitious as to their cooking, having an enormous number of dishes, few of which are palatable. The prevailing complaint in America is dyspepsia,—and no wonder. An American often starts each meal with a glass of ice water, but what appears extraordinary to a stranger is the enormous variety and quantity of dishes that he has in front of him, and the pace at which he eats. He thinks nothing of having for dinner soup and fish; and then, all at one time, on innumerable little dishes, he has, say roast beef, roast duck, ham, potatoes, maccaroni, tomatoes, beans, rice, artichokes, green corn, and other dishes too numerous to mention, at all of which he works rapidly, finishing up with ice cream, and raw

fruit and coffee. It takes some time to learn the names of the new dishes, as there are so many of them. Some of them are old friends with new names. Let us take the restaurant card at a first-class New York Hotel. We find 32 thirty different sorts of vegetables, nearly sixty dishes to order, twenty different fish, and fifteen different ways of cooking clams and oysters, to say nothing of every kind of joint; cold meat, fifteen different salads, and twenty ice creams, fancy cakes and fresh fruits too numerous to mention, whilst such names as little neck clams, chicken gombo, soup, sheeps-head, bass, baked borgies, blue fish, and king fish, soft shell crab, and boiled squab, golden buck, squash, mush, oyster, plant, sweet peppers, chow-chow, and others, render it at first nearly impossible to order dinner, for fear you should get some new sort of fish instead of an ice-cream, or a rockaway oyster if you thought you were ordering some mashed potatoes; but after a while you discover all these things, and learn that the cooking equals, and I think excels, that of Eastern cities.

With regard to the service, as you get West you are waited on, as a rule, by niggers, 33 but in the best houses East they have white waiters. Some misguided individual told me it was not the custom to tip servants in America. The only difference I found was that you tipped a great deal more and oftener.

The climate of the East Atlantic States is, during the months of June, July, and August, very hot and relaxing, and so, having business out West, I took this time of the year to make my journey there. After leaving the Hudson river I again passed over the Niagara rapids on my way West, but the country is entirely devoid of interest till one arrives at Chicago. There I stopped and took a look at the great hog slaughtering establishments. They were well worth a visit; the stockyards are some three miles from the town; you reach them by that most convenient mode of travel in large cities, the cable car. When once you get in the stockyards, you look about for any signs of hogs, but can't see any; yet they are nevertheless steadily marching on 34 to death in those black wooden bridges that cross the yards over your head. They are slipped out of the cars and are gently driven in herds till they all in time arrive at one point, the slaughter-house. When you get to this same slaughter-house, you are astounded at what one could almost call the science to

which pig-sticking has been brought. Who has not been present, when a boy, at the death of the domestic hog, who after having been partially stunned by a coal hammer in his stye, is hunted through the asparagus bed and young potatoes, and is finally killed by the gardener in the melon frame, with a blunt pocket knife. But it is rather different here. When they get to the slaughter, or to speak more correctly, “packing house,” they are forced into pens—a man with a “bull whacker” driving them in, and in general, seeing to the circulation; they pass some five or six pens, till finally they arrive at the last one. Here they get a rather apprehensive air, not unlike the 35 patients in a fashionable doctor's waiting room, but it's no go turning back; an iron ring is put round piggy's leg and he is hoisted up in the air, and passes over the side to the hands of the executioner. Here is a really disgusting sight. As the hog passes him, he sticks it once, and it passes on bleeding profusely into the “presence room,” as you might call it, where some score of hogs are sliding away, kicking with their throats cut. The executioner kills some four or five thousand a day; he receives a pound a day wages, and deserves it, as he stands up to his knees in blood. As each hog gets to the end of the section he drops into a trough of boiling water, and is, after a minute or two, pulled out, and all the hair scratched off by machinery. He is then rolled along a table, and any small pieces of hair on him are taken off by hand, when he is again hauled up by the hind legs, and his inside taken out, each being neatly put into its own barrel. A little of the smell here goes a long way. He then takes quite a journey 36 round the room, through a passage, till he comes to a large chamber. With one stroke he is divided; five more strokes make him into ham, sides of bacon, and head. Salt is put over him, and he goes through a hole in the floor to a cooling-chamber, where he lays till he is wanted for packing. They dispose of six hogs a minute, for ten hours a day.

On the other side one can see the cattle slaughtered. They are all separately penned and then shot, afterwards going through similar operations as the hogs. The amount of hogs killed in one establishment daily was, when I was there, 4,000, and cattle 1,000; but this packing house is, I believe, capable of doing double this business. Nothing is wasted—skin, hair, scraps, and blood, all are used, but it must require careful management to work

this huge machine, so that nothing occurs to stop the ever-coming pigs. Chicago received in one year the enormous quantity of 7,059,355 hogs, 37 and 1,382,477 cattle. Of this she shipped 1,394,990 hogs, and 886,614 cattle.

The number of lines that run from Chicago to Omaha, Kansas City, is legion. Each and all claim some superiority; one has better “sleepers,” another better dining-rooms, whilst a third offers you better sleeping, better eating than all the rest together, to say nothing of the fact that it has patent paper and steel rim wheels, Miller's patent platforms, rock ballast, no “washouts,” and twenty other little advantages that are supposed to decide the mind of the vacillating traveller. I chose the line which connects up with the Missouri River in Nebraska, which eventually lands you in Denver. I divided the journey into certain sections. The first is of course the more civilized, and as you get further West you get it wilder, but there is one thing that is hard to impress on anyone who has not crossed the States, and that is its immense size. You may say that it is three thousand miles 38 across, or that it takes six days and six nights continuous travelling, but that can give very little impression of the apparently boundless tracts of country one passes through —one day in a wheat field, another in a corn (maize) field, a day on the plains, or a night in the mountains,—that is the scale on which things are done. Let us take Illinois alone, the first State through which we pass on our way West. This is highly cultivated, and is not to be confounded with any of the cattle raising States, such as Texas, Wyoming, and New Mexico. Illinois produced 2,177,889,496 bushels of corn in ten years, or an average of 217,788,950 bushels a year. Also an average of 35,887,949 bushels of wheat, and 58,153,070 bushels of oats, in addition to which she has enormous crops of rye, barley, and buckwheat. Iowa, which is the next State, produced similar amounts. I quote these figures in order to give you some idea of the enormous scale on which wheat, corn, and other cereals 39 are grown; of course these are only two States, and not large States either. When we think of some forty other States all producing in prodigious quantities, some wheat, rice, sugar, cotton, tobacco, cattle, hogs, sheep, gold and silver, if you can but grasp the idea of the quantity of all these and many other articles, you must

be prejudiced indeed, if the manner in which they are produced and handled does not gain your praise. You may not care for their politics, their form of Government, or their social arrangements, but their success in business, their energy, their push and daring in commerce, and pertinacity and spirit of enterprise in agriculture, must always make the Americans the object of admiration to any-one who is fortunate enough to see their country and study their character.

One gets a little tired, after passing these endless crops of corn, and you are glad when the coloured man turns the car into a sleeper, 40 and you turn in. It is very disagreeable if the car is full, as you have to go through the operation of dressing in the morning in bed. I usually got up early and had comparatively clear decks, but it is far from comfortable, as the washing arrangements are very scanty, though the company, with far-seeing liberality, supply the car with a toothbrush for the crowd. The journey as far as Denver is not very interesting; you still pass through corn, wheat, and small towns. The rivers of Missouri and Mississipi afford some little interest, but the principal excitement was reserved till we were some two hundred miles west of Denver. Here we met a storm, and a storm on the plains is no trifle. I was asleep with the window open and a dust window in. It started by sweeping all my bed-clothes off. Crash went the roof of a freight car next to us; the train was stopped, and the Pullman rocked like a ship at sea. It is impossible to describe the force of the wind; for an hour the lightning 41 was terrible. Not for a single second did sheet and forked lightning cease playing around us. It was an awful storm, at least so it appeared to. me, and on enquiry subsequently I found it was the worst one they had had for some time. It stopped us for more than two hours, and then we proceeded slowly with men on push cars in front of the engine to look for “wash-outs.”

The rest of the journey was still rather monotonous, but interesting for the first time. We gradually got out of the cultivated ground and struck the plains—those boundless billows of short grass which at one time must have covered nearly the whole of the country West of New York State. I “struck” an old resident, who amused me very much with his accounts of buffalo hunting in old times, when his boat was delayed half a day on the Missouri

river by the buffaloes crossing the stream. Indeed, not so very long ago it was possible to see game from the cars, but at present one sees nothing unless 42 it be a chicken hawk, or a few prairie dogs; in a great many places steps are being taken by the far-seeing inhabitants to protect what Mr. Chamberlain calls “the barbarous sports of the well-to-do.” *A propos* of that, I see that the abolition of the game laws is a strong plank in the Radical platform. Now, I should like to ask any sensible working man, does he think that if the game laws were entirely swept, away to-morrow, that he should be allowed, on a Saturday afternoon say, to roam at his will over the neighbouring farms and try his luck for a hare for Sunday? He may rest assured of this, that whether the land was owned by landlord, peasant proprietor, or some local communist, he would no more be allowed to shoot on land that he did not own, than that some sporting miners would be allowed to enjoy free rat hunts in, say one of Mr. John Bright's mills.

As long as property has any rights at all, so long will the law of trespass have to be 43 respected. These laws exist in even the most democratic countries—Switzerland and America. You have no more right to cross a man's land even in the wilds of California, if he objects, than you have to cross the park of a nobleman in England. I cannot but think that those who are opposed to our very liberal game laws are opposed to them on the same grounds that the Puritans objected to bull baiting: not because of the pain it gave the bull, but because of the pleasure it gave the spectators; so it is not because of any particular harm it does the country, but because of the amusement it gives to those who participate in the sport. I say liberal game laws, because it is not confined to any “lord of the manor” or “squire,” as in the old time, but is open to any one who can pay for it. It is valuable because there is only a certain amount. It is in great demand, so in order to have it you must, as the Yankees say, treat it as straight up and down business. I 44 do not shoot myself, or personally care twopence if I never saw a pheasant again, but the only result I can see of the abolition of the game laws is, that wealthy people, instead of going into the country and spending their money there in the winter months, would spend it in Egypt, shooting in Algeria, on the Rocky Mountains, in Paris or Vienna, or generally travelling

abroad in a decent climate, as few people would care to live six months in a clay country, with nothing to do in the way of recreation. The amount of damage done, except in a few cases, is nothing as compared with the trade it makes. It is in my opinion as legitimate and sound an attraction to the country as a new pier or an aquarium to a struggling watering place.

But to resume our journey. I was advised to stay a day at Denver, but regretted I did not spend it at Colorado Springs instead, as I should then have had time to visit the wonderful “Garden 45 of the Gods,” and other places. Denver is not much of a place of interest; it is simply remarkable that such a large, thriving city should have been established so many hundreds of miles from anywhere. But it is here you get the first glimpse of the Rocky Mountains. What first strikes you is the crystal clearness of the air; everything seems so distinct, so sharp, and is in this respect so different from any other mountain scenery, not a cloud to be seen:

“And they were canopied by the blue sky, “So cloudless, clear, and purely beautiful, “That God, alone, was to be seen in heaven.”

They seem to rise abruptly out of the prairie; you cannot take your eyes off them, whilst in the background Pikes Peak keeps watch over the enormous range. What strange scenes he must have looked on, when the Indian, and the bear, and jaguar held undisputed sway, when the first adventurous settlers dragged their weary way across the vast plains we have crossed with such ease, and when the greed for gold created 46 the great rushes to that part of the country, when every man's motto was, “Pikes Peak or bust,” when Denver and Pueblo were full of miners, gamblers, thieves, and men and women of the worst and wildest character, when “shooting on sight” and lynching were of daily occurrence, and when every man carried his scales (as well as his pistol) in his pocket to weigh out his “dust,” but now the most warlike crowd you see is a party of cowboys from the plains “painting the town red,” though, of course, there are occasional shootings in the saloons. Denver is an important town on account of its proximity to the mining towns of Leadville,

etc., some twenty-six millions of dollars in gold and silver being produced in the adjacent mines. There are also some important copper smelting works.

A few hours after leaving Denver, and after passing the small towns of Colorado Springs and Manitou Springs, the line turns sharp to the right, through Pueblo, which is, by the way, 47 one of the hottest places I ever was in, so hot, in fact, that the natives assert that the railway lines get up and lay in the shade till they see a train coming, and then lay themselves down again, and where just through the town we hear several sharp shrieks of the whistle and we all put our heads out of the window, just in time to see the “cow-catcher” kill one heifer and break another's leg. This is repeated two or three times, once catching a horse, and as the company has to pay for it, it must have knocked the profit off that trip, but they go full tilt ahead all the time. After these incidents we seriously commence the attack, by entering the first gorge of the Rockies, called the grand canon of the Arkansas. It is indeed an awe-inspiring sight as the train, a tiny speck, crawls round the ledges of rock, shut in on each side by those enormous rocks, which rise sheer away to the almost incredible height of four thousand feet; you can just see the blue sky above by craning 48 your neck. The engineering and scenery on this, the Rio Grande Railway, fairly defy description, the gradient at times being as much as two hundred feet in a mile. If one thinks one is going to scale this range in an hour or two, one is vastly mistaken; the more canons you go through the more ranges, hills, and mountains one sees stretching away for hundreds of miles, heaped up in a seemingly endless confusion of jagged peaks. Each turn shews you some new form of inimitable mass of colouring. Each mountain is a vast range of itself. In one canon you can see the sun shining brilliantly, whilst in the same glance you see a storm of mist and rain driving up a valley that is a country of itself. The wildest scenery you ever saw in Scotland is like, say Woodhouse Moor, in comparison to the awful grandeur of the Rockies; all the time you are mounting up the steepest grades, going so slow, although driven by two powerful locomotives, that you can get on and off the cars.

At 4,000 feet my aneroid goes smash, but still there is no cessation in scenery. Chain after chain of mountains, pile upon pile of rocks, thrown into the most fantastic shapes by some awful struggle, till after four or five hours panting, groaning, struggling, we arrive at the summit, only a few feet below the timber line, and in the region of everlasting snow, twelve thousand feet above the level of the sea. Here the scenery is so unnaturally wild and weird that one cannot but think of the insignificant littleness of man. Once on the top we slide pretty quickly through canon and under snow sheds to the other side, but it takes most of the night; and in the morning, about four, we are awoke with the pleasant intelligence that a “washout” has swept away a bridge, and we must transfer ourselves and baggage to another train on the other side, which operation takes about two hours. These washouts came down like a torrent, rising as much as ten feet in five 50 minutes. One Chinaman, in fact, only just escaped with his life, leaving his coat hanging on the arch. After getting settled in the new train we can take a look round. We find ourselves in those terrible Alkali Deserts. I say terrible because it is impossible to exclude the dust, which is impalpable and covers everything. The colour of the ground tries the eyes, and you are tormented with an unconquerable thirst; for two days we go through this; you can see nothing but dried mud and alkali for hundreds of miles. Sometimes you see a small party of Indians, queer-looking objects, on their funny Indian ponies, as ragged looking as their owners.

At some of the stations there are a few Indian squaws, horrid looking, greasy, fat, and ugly , with a curious looking “papoosc,” all wired up in a wicker work basket, and carried on its mother's back. They devour anything in the way of broken meat with greediness, but 51 are almost too lazy to go and pick up coin; as for running to get it, the idea would never enter their heads. They are the lowest type of humanity, and after seeing a few for curiosity, you are disgusted with them.

After the day's travel, which has indeed been a trying one, you approach that much talked of city, Salt Lake. I was assured there was nothing very much to see except the tabernacle, so did not stop. Some people have an idea that they will see a Mormon with

half a dozen wives following him, but I believe it is just like any other town. A man, if he wants more than one wife, must keep up a separate home for each, but the Government are harassing them very much now, as polygamy is illegal, and the poor old elders of the Church are having a hot time of it. There are a great many Gentiles, as non-Mormons are called, who live in Utah, who don't believe in polygamy. It is said to be impossible to sink in the great 52 Salt Lake, one native assuring me that it is possible to drive a herd of cattle to an island on the lake. But all the salt in the lake would not make me swallow that. After passing through Ogden we sleep, and on waking find ourselves in Nevada. It is the same sort of desert—a journey to go on once, for curiosity, but never again. What a blessing when the Panama Canal is finished! But it grows better in the evening, as we approach the magnificent cordon of mountains, the Sierra Nevada. The range possesses, I believe, scenery equal to the Rockies, but unfortunately we passed its glories in the night. One thing we were lucky enough to escape,—we never struck any mosquitoes. They are a great nuisance, and I suffered very much from them in some places. Talking of them reminds me of two Irishmen who were sleeping in the same room for the first time on a farm in South Carolina, and were terribly bitten by these insects. At last, in desperation 53 they hid themselves under the clothes. After half an hour one says to the other, “Pat,” says he, “look out and see if those murtherous bastes are gone.” Pat looks out, and sees some fireflies at the foot of the bed. “Holy murther,” says he, “it's no good hiding, Mike; there's more than a hundred of the haythins come back to look for us with lanterns.”

We were glad indeed to get to Sacramento, and have a decent breakfast. It seemed a nice town, with its cupola of gold. In a few hours, after crossing a ferry in the largest ferry boat in the world—the boilers fired by petroleum—we arrived at San Francisco, the Metropolis of the Pacific, the Capital of the Golden State, and the City of the Golden Gate.

THE GOLDEN STATE,

“The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.”— Psalm cxxi

WHO has not thought of California? and queer thoughts, too, some of them have been; a mixture of revolvers and bowie-knives, silver kings and Chinamen, of rough life, and association with men in red flannel shirts and blue pants shoved into their boots. And yet, with all its civilization, a savour of these things lingers round the State even now. Perhaps no State in the Union has seen such changes, and gone through such “tough” scenes. 55 Inhabited by the Indians and the Mexican “greaser” people, we knew and cared nothing for California. Then came the gold rush of '46, and American life and customs soon swept away any wealth and luxury there might have been among the Mexican Californian, and left, as the only sign as to what had been, the much-abused sun-worshipping “greaser.” But now all is changed; and San Francisco is one of the sights of America. No city in the Union possesses such hotels, such streets, such luxury. From a dirty little town where, in the wet season, men, cattle, and trams used to be almost buried in the sludge, it has sprung up to be, in my opinion, the cleanest, brightest, and best arranged town in America. Some say gold was the curse of California, others that it was the making of it. There is no doubt that, though the wish to make money quickly, either by mining or gambling in stocks, has produced some terrible spells of depression, it nevertheless 56 attracted to the State all the most energetic and venturesome people. The weak, plodding, look-before-you-leap element dropped out on the way, and only those with most push arrived in the State, and the Pioneers had their reward, as the handsome residences on “Nob Hill” testify.

We live in a lucky age, for now is the time to visit California. You can still enjoy a certain amount of the old wildness in the interior, and when you are tired of it you can run to San Francisco and sit down to all eight o'clock dinner that even Paris could not beat. What a starting point, too, for excursions for sport and scenery! Given six months vacation, there is no place I would sooner start from than San Francisco, for the Yosemite Valley, with its wonderful scenery, the geysers, the petrified forests in Calistoga county, the big trees at Mariposa—over three hundred feet high, and through one of which an archway, capable of sheltering a wagon and four horses, has been 57 cut—a sail North to see the wonders of Puget Sound, or further still, to the almost unexplored regions of Alaska. Whilst for sport

the Columbia river and its tributaries give the finest salmon fishing in the world, and you can, if properly posted, shoot deer, antelope, black and cinnamon bear, and in the Sierra Nevada get a shot at a grizzly. But if you shoot at him, shoot straight, and not when he is up hill, or you will never again enjoy a canvass-back duck at “Marchands,” or stewed Terrapin at “The Poodle Dog.”

But to return to San Francisco. Of course you stop at the Palace, far away the finest hotel I have ever seen in any country, and when you drive in through its enormous doors you are astonished at its marble courtyard, whilst tier after tier of white galleries run up to the glass roof. It is a model house on an enormous scale, capable of making up two thousand five hundred beds, and every room has a separate bath-room 58 attached. And yet in a few days you are as much at home as if you were in a private hotel, whilst everyone seems to make it his especial business to wait on you, and you are not patronised by that objectionable Eastern American individual, who, with his feet on the back of a chair hands you the key of your room, making at the time an accurate shot at the spittoon at your feet. One thing you do get West of the Rockies, and that is courtesy, and by courtesy, I do not mean servility, but a wish to see you “through” right. What fruit you can get at breakfast? And no wonder, for has not California strawberries nine months in the year? whilst peaches, pears, oranges, apples, figs, and grapes and every sort of berry follow each other in rapid succession. The fruit in the hotel is as dear as in New York, but outside, Black Hamburgs such as you pay 8s. a pound for in England, are old for a mere trifle, and ordinary grapes at something like three cents a pound. The first 59 thing to do is to drive out to the Cliff House and get a glimpse of the Pacific, or better still,take a cable car. These cars are very elegant, no dirt, no noise. The cable runs underground at the rate of eight miles an hour; there are no collisions, and no more people are hurt than by the horse cars, and last, but not least, they run up the steep California streets, at an angle of 45°, as fast as they run on the flat. What a blessing they would be at Bradford for instance!

But they do not run through the park, so we get out and enjoy a four miles walk over the most level road, and through the finest park in America. I do not know its acreage, but it

is four or five miles long, and I should say as much in breadth; the greater part of it is still unimproved or only just straightened-up but about a-third is laid out most beautifully and contains a fine conservatory. A band plays here on Sundays, and thousands of the toilers of San Francisco come out, listen to the music, and enjoy 60 themselves in a rational manner, without I think, in any way having jeopardised their chances of meeting their straight-laced English cousins in the happy hereafter. Whilst on the topic of parks, I have seen discussions about a public park for Wakefield, and Heath Common has entered into this discussion. Many people say it is too far. I would say that all the parks of the American cities are a considerable way from the towns, but this does not seem any hindrance to people visiting them. It is infinitely more healthy, and does people a great deal more physical good to get clear out of the town, than to sit in a park surrounded by houses.

In the middle of the park there is also a capital conservatory, at one time containing some very rare flowers, but unfortunately, a short time since, the greater part was burnt down, and all the wonderful flowers were burnt with it. The grounds and roads are capitally kept, considering the area of the place. It is a great 61 resort for the well-to-do San Franciscans in the afternoon. They come here in their characteristic buggys, and their chief enjoyment is to drive slowly for a time, and then what they call “speed-up.” “Speeding up” is not the easy operation you might imagine it to be; all sorts of little details must be observed. First of all it is no use speeding up when there is no one to see you, as part of the fun evidently consists in making people stare at you. I remember an American at Carlsbad, above all places, who used to speed up amongst the water drinkers, which, as some of them had come for the sake of their nerves, did not afford them much gratification. But then the American succeeded in attracting attention, which was all he wanted. Then you must take hold of your reins half way down; it is immaterial whether the horse pulls or not, and of course you set your feet firmly against each side of the buggy as if Maud S. herself was pulling at you. Neither must you forget the 62 expression of your face; your eyes must be set with a fixed determined sort of look, and you must have a general sort of stern Napoleon-at-the-battle-of-Waterloo expression in your face. Then you carefully calculate

your distance from the largest and greenest looking party on the side path, and with a dozen preliminary hauls at the mouth of the wretched, long-jointed weak hocked, bad shouldered brute from the dollar-an-hour livery stable, you say, “git up and git,” and you fly past the admiring crowd. Of course, directly you get round the corner out of sight you pull up and “lay for” the next pearl-powdered group you see. Naturally there are a few really neat looking turn-outs; but the majority are dirty,—horse, harness, and carriage being as a rule kept at a livery yard, where of course they do not get much attention, and one misses sadly the neat, clean, solid look of our English turnouts. Not unnaturally, we felt rather excited to get a whiff of the sea after a three thousand 63 mile ride, but I regret to say the smell of the briny was not improved by the carcase of a dead whale which Jonathan exhibited on the beach at, five cents a head, whilst the immediate approach to the Cliff House was set off by an enormous wooden figure of St. Jacob, holding in his hand a bottle of oil with which his name has been recently associated; whilst on all sides we were beset to buy the succulent parched pea-nut, or the still more nutritious banana; whilst, if you are *blase* of these dissipations, a large beer hall and skating rink are at your disposal.

We soon arrived at the Cliff House; it is built on the edge of the cliff, and faces the rocks where the famous sea lions are. It was an extraordinary sight to see these huge ungainly animals lying out in the sun—hundreds of them, growling and yelping, and swimming around. They are never molested, and apparently enjoy themselves. We then went to the top of the 64 hill to go through Sutro heights, called after Mr. Sutro, a gentleman whose acquaintance I was fortunate enough to make in the interior, and who very kindly permitted me to see his grounds and library. Mr. Sutro is famous in America for his great engineering feat of draining the celebrated Cornstock mines by a seven mile tunnel is now devoting his millions to the benefit of the San Franciscans. He has turned several acres of barren sand into the most lovely gardens, shaded from the wind, and filled with flowering shrubs, eucalipti, and flowers from all over the world; he intends to place his library of some three hundred thousand volumes, purchased mostly in England, in a house in the grounds, and make a present of it to the city. It is just on the edge of the cliff, and commands the

most lovely view of the Golden Gate; the sea breaking over the bar, and the bay of San Francisco, with its bluff headlands, forming one of the prettiest scenes on the Pacific slope.

65

Before leaving San Francisco, this letter would be incomplete without an account of China Town, which occupies quite a considerable portion of the city. It is safe enough to visit it during the day, but it is better to go with a detective at night, for he will show you the sights most worth seeing. There are some fifty thousand Chinese living in it, and it is next to impossible to say how they huddle together—not an inch is lost. For instance, a tailor will sleep under his bench or a shop-keeper on his shelves. In every nook and cranny there is John huddled up. How they live, in the most abominable stenches—to which the hog slaughtering at Chicago was a trifle—with no drainage, no ventilation, and the streets and alleys full of people, resembling an ant's nest, beats me. There is not the slightest attempt at cleaning an alley, and yet, strange to say, they are personally the cleanest people, living in one continual wash, which is deposited on the floor. 66 In visiting their wooden houses you pass through apparently miles of narrow streets; you rather rudely, I thought, investigate their houses, but wherever you look there are innumerable Chinee “Washee Washee” men cleaning themselves. They just “lokee up” at the “Melikan man,” and go on “washee-washee.” You are pretty sure to be near the mark if you address him as John Lee or Lee Sam or Ah Sam. They have stores and very funny stores; everything in a food store, say, appears to be ready, roasted whole, pig, sausages, greasy looking ducks, etc. Their “joss houses” are very funny: gods are all around, gods to the weather, gods to drink, gods to their food, and medicine. They are rather dark and smell of some sort of incense they burn. John lays around smoking; he does not drink much, but is an inveterate smoker, and the whole interior reminds one, with its gongs and carvings, of a rather dirty old curiosity shop. We come out and go to have tea at a 67 restaurant. The tea is put in one tea cup and boiling water poured on it, and then turned into another cup to drink; it is almost colourless but very good. They give you the most extraordinary, yet most delicious, preserved fruits and ginger. We then prepare to visit the opium dens. They

are illegal and are generally underground—bare dark rooms with shelves round them on which lie the Chinamen, and the air is dense with an infernal smell. They generally smoke in couples, helping each other, and lay like logs with a stare in their eyes, far off in the land of roses. Occasionally you are offered a pull with the words “Melican man often smokee.” The detective stands outside; he has often seen it, and cannot stand the smell. I went in for a thorough investigation, but it is sickening and disgusting.

After seeing a few, we paid a hurried visit to the lady who keeps a live edible cat and dog store, and proceeded by a variety of passages to the 68 theatre. Who can describe a Chinese theatre? I can't, at least, give, you much idea as to what it really resembles. The building is like an ordinary music hall, and is chock full of Chinamen. The piece lasts, I believe, several days, and they usually play some ten hours at a sitting. The thing that strikes you most is the band. The bandsmen sit on the stage just behind the actors, and make the most dreadful din ever heard by human ear. No time or tune. Every man has an instrument or two which he hits or blows as he likes, or how he likes, or leaves it alone. The noise is indescribable. One man only appears to do anything with any regularity, and for hours he bangs a tin drum; he pays no attention to anyone, but just bangs away. Others produced sounds from other—I was going to say—musical instruments, but they simply clang, shriek, pull stringed instruments which produce ear-piercing notes, to which the shrill key of a bagpipe is as music 69 drifted down from heaven. Such all extraordinary shindy is incredible, unless you have heard it. In the midst of all this, a highly decorated individual shrieks at the top of his falsetto voice, and occasionally decapitates an imaginary Chinaman; then a crowd bustle on the stage, and as quickly bustle off. The stage is also crowded with all sorts of people having nothing to do with the piece. We are on the stage, sometimes with the band and sometimes with the actors. I narrowly escaped a severe blow on the head from the decapitating gentleman, and the rows of smug-faced Chinese in the “stalls” sent up an oily smile. There is no scenery. At last, deafened and hustled, and sickened with the smell of the main drain, which apparently flows under the

stage, we left, and were thankful to find ourselves in the open air again. If we called again in a week or two we should no doubt see the end of this extraordinary drama.

70

There is a great agitation going on in the Pacific slope as to the Chinese labour. Naturally the working men don't “freeze on” John, as he lives on a handful of rice, is a skilful copyist, and controls the shoe and cigar business. The middle classes pretend to sympathise with the Americans, but patronise Chinese labour whenever they think no one is looking. The Government forbids Chinese emigration, but somehow or other they manage to slip in. I fully sympathise with the white labour, and should vote in favour of keeping cheap Chinese labour out under the circumstances; but I fail to see how they can turn fifty thousand out all in a batch, now that they are in. Besides, they are not going the right way about it. Their meetings are very lawless and demoralised, being presided over by a very violent man, whose verbosity is only equalled by the great and good Gladstone. I fear there will be serious trouble before the question is settled. The bottom of the whole 71 matter is that Chinamen will never mix up with the white races, and that every penny that they make here they invest in China, and also have all their food sent from there. If they only patronized American stores, people would be more willing to receive them.

Another race of men who are slowly coming into San Francisco are the Japanese. They are employed in making the peculiar artistic articles of their country, and some of their productions are perfect gems. Their ivory carvings, screens, little silver kettles, and different articles of bronze, lacquer, and porcelain, show a laborious attention to detail almost impossible to find in any other work, besides which they produce an immense variety of artistic ornaments at a very much lower figure, and far superior in artistic merit than the cheap ornaments we have in the old country. It is curious that in this country Gilbert and Sullivan's “Mikado” has drawn a great deal of attention to Japanese art.

72

The principal thing foreigners hear about California is the climate—the glorious climate. It certainly is glorious if you know where to go for it, but it varies very much in certain places. For instance, you might as well, if you are rheumatic, live in Glasgow as in San Francisco, in certain seasons of the year, as at a certain hour every day a strong bitterly cold wind sets in, and blows with a steady force that tears down everything, and changes even the growth of trees; in addition to which there is often a heavy fog in the morning. This is also the case in some of the villages, and generally on the coast. But a couple of miles away you get under some hill or behind a ridge, and then you find out what a glorious country it really is. There are hundreds of snug secluded resorts in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada and the coast range, where the sun always shines, where you can sit out of doors all day —but sleep under two blankets at night,—where there is no dew, 73 no damp, and no malaria. Perhaps the best places for lung and chest troubles are in Southern California, at San Diego, Santa Barbara, and Los Angeles, where living, when you get the “hang of it,” is fairly cheap, where you have good society, and you can amuse yourself with quail shooting, or riding, or in superintending a farm, on which you can grow almost anything in the world. Or if you want a little out-door exercise, you can also make a tour through the country on horseback, shooting as you go along.

We had a most delightful trip of this kind through the coast range, and saw some charming scenery, not of course as fine as the Sierra Nevada, but still such as if it was in England would attract thousands of tourists. There were swarms of mountain quail, and an occasional crack at a wild cat—the size of a small wolf—or deer. Sometimes we camped out, and slept in our blankets, with our toes to a big fire, and half awake and half asleep watched the evening star 74 rise over those soft Californian hills, with nothing to break the solitude but the weird yelping of the coyotes, sounding at first like some spectre pack running through the chapparal; other nights we would “strike” some hospitable “greaser,” who, driven back by the ever coming emigrant, had “located” a mountain lot, where he lived rich in a flock of snow-white goats and a patch of land. Beans, served in the Spanish style, and rice fried with onions and grease, were his fare, and when we

handed some bacon out of the saddle bags, it made our mouths water more than one of Delmonico's choicest *plâts* . And what a medley crew we were!—an American, a German, an Englishman, and a family of Mexicans, whilst his Swiss neighbour employed an old negro, two Chinese, and an Indian.

To some people this might not seem amusement; but I could have ridden through those hills for weeks. Every day something new: finding tarantula, that enormous loathsome-looking 75 spider, or the still more deadly centipede, or poison oak; hunting for a crutch-handled stick in the manzanita shrub, or following the track of a puma, or Californian lion—a cowardly brute, but a deadly enemy to stock—and a hundred and one other things that at any rate to me were novel and interesting.

I was quite sorry when I came down the hill and struck the dusty stage road leading from Soledad to San Luis Obispo; when I say dusty I mean it in its full sense; fine, penetrating, choking dust, six inches to a foot deep, and no beer to wash it down either. I think it must have been the dust which so much annoyed the “tenderfoot” from down east, who, when stopping at an Inn on the road, had a small bird placed before him. “Say boss,” said he, “What's this?” “Guess it's bird.” “Has it got wings?” “Guess so.” “Can it fly?” asked he. “Why, certn'ly,” said the Boss. “Then take the doggorned 76 thing away. I don't want nothin' to do with a thing that's got wings, and can fly, and don't fly out of this cussed country!”

And now, before leaving California, it would not be amiss to say a few words which may be of interest to the small capitalist or to the working man. I have endeavoured to give some idea of its luxuries, its healthful climate, and its amusements, and I can imagine a young man with enough money to take him there wanting to know what sort of a prospect he would have with no capital but his health and strength to help him. But first I should like to say I was only there two months, and in that time one can only get a comparatively superficial idea of a country the size of California. However, what information I have is got from personal enquiry, or reliable sources, as far as I could judge. To start with, it is

no place for men to go to with the idea of making money easily in a short time. If—and remember 77 I am speaking of a man with no capital but his labour—he takes up, or, to use the correct word, “homesteads” a plot of land up in the hills, it will be a hard life, very likely remote from supplies. He will be able to get flour, bacon, and coffee, and will have to make out with very little else. He will be far from society, and the nearest town will only consist of a few general stores and saloons.

Generally speaking, the best lands, near water, and near the railway, are taken up, improved, and command prices of from five dollars to ten dollars an acre, but where new ground is opened up the man has a hard life and may possibly work all of it before he sees his farm complete, fenced, clear and properly irrigated. Before giving you the “homestead” and “pre-emption” laws, I will also say it is no place for clerks in the office or in a dry goods store. There are as many in San Franscisco as there are in New York. A 78 Government homestead is a tract of one hundred and sixty acres of land given away by the United States on condition that the person taking it lives upon and improves the same for five years, paying only a fee of £3 10s. on application at the U.S. Land Office and £1 on making final proof. He must start living on it and improving it as soon as possible, and when at the end of the five years he shews that he has honestly complied with the law he receives a complete title.

The “pre-emption” law grants settlers one hundred and sixty acres on condition that he settles on the land and improves it for one year only; but for this the United States charge 5s. an acre. He is also entitled to certain forest land if he plants trees in place of timber cut down. In addition to this a settler may take up six hundred and forty acres of land in the desert that cannot be cultivated unless by artificial irrigation at a 79 cost of Is. an acre to begin with, and he must show that in three years he has irrigated the whole of it. Then he pays 4s. an acre to complete the title. Besides this the railroads, when in construction, were granted lands in lieu of subsidies. These lands are alongside the railroad in alternate sections, and can be purchased for from 10s. to £1, £2, and £3 an acre, according to their advantages. No timber is to be cut except for domestic or fencing purposes till completion

of title. The railway companies also make arrangements for allowing time for payment, interest at seven per cent. per annum being charged.

A settler must remember that apart front the cultivation of his land, it will increase in value by others settling near him, and that his “unearned increment” will depend on his sagacity in selecting his land. He need not fear being over-taxed, or robbed of his “unearned increment;” doctrines of that 80 class have no show in America. Uncle Sam wishes to attract capital to his country, and not to drive it away.

Now as to hired labour. A strong active man, who can drive a team or look after horses, can get at least £6 or £7 a month, and his board and lodging—three good meat meals daily. Clothes are rather dearer here, boots about the same. Perhaps the best way for a man to do is to go to some colony, work a year or two, save money, and then buy say ten acres of improved land, well watered, work it himself, devote one third of his time to say raising fruit on it, and the rest of his time hire his labour out. He cannot buy a farm and stock it to start with, but he can by these means get the nucleus together.

With regard to the small capitalist, I may say that there are a number of improved farms always in the market to be bought at reasonable rates,—perhaps some 81 on mortgage. They are sold by two classes of people,—one class who pre-empt farms only to sell again as soon as possible, and the other by people who are retiring from business from various causes. But to the small capitalist I should say, live in the country twelve months; or at any rate six, before investing much. There, are lots of worthless places ready to be sold to you dearly; in fact, to use an Americanism, they will, if they can, play you for a sucker!

To both classes I should.say, you need fear no storms; you can work all the year round in your shirt sleeves. Sunstroke or malaria are unknown, and you can grow anything, from an orange or olive to a pomegranate or potatoe. There are in the country good schools, libraries, and churches. And lastly, if you do go, remember these things—If you want to buy land or a railway ticket, go to the head office. Do not tell any stranger your business,

or “blow” about your money. Don't speak to anyone of your 82 private affairs, nor “freeze” on to the man who knows the old man at home, and remembers you when you were a little boy. Do not play cards, nor drink with anyone at all, or you will certainly be robbed. If a nicely spoken gentleman wants you to buy a well-filled pocket-book he has just picked up, or a new gold watch for five dollars, don't trade. If you want information or advice, go to the English agents or consul, or, failing this, you generally get attention at the head police station. The Central Pacific or Southern Pacific Railway's land people are, I believe, “on the square.” Live economically, work hard, and look to the future, and, with strong arms and a stout heart, you will succeed in California.

THROUGH ARIZONA TO EL PASO DEL NORTE

“On sandals and shores and desert wilderness.”

Milton.

IN my previous letters I never said a word about California's greatest wonder—her mineral springs; but I have omitted so many things that are worth mentioning that the more I write the more there seems to have been forgotten, till I almost give it up in despair, and come to a conclusion that to travel over ten thousand miles of country, and attempt to describe it, without the aid of a short-hand secretary, is a task that is beyond my feeble powers. If, Mr. 84 Editor, the circulation of your paper falls of because people say that they cannot wade through the amount of trash that is written about America, then put the blame on me, who so inadequately describes it, and not on the country.

Nature seems to have chosen California as a safety valve for all the nasty tasting water she could not provide for elsewhere. All over the State it bubbles out hot and cold, with every conceivable combination of chemicals. But what a place for recovering your health! Air, water, and climate all seem to have united together to help the poor mortal to get on a bit; talk to anyone in California about them—either the man who has suffered all his life from the excruciating agony of inflammatory rheumatism or the genial toper who for

the last ten years has averaged twenty cocktails a day—all will tell you the same story of relief and cure. At Paraiso Springs you find one of the loveliest 85 secluded spots you can imagine, hemmed in on every side by mountains covered with chapparalle, which grows from three to six feet high, and resembles, in all but smell, a sage bush. You live in a few wooden cottages, standing in a wild sort of garden, where the geraniums grow as high as your head, unless they are eaten up by the cows, who occasionally in the night bump against the sides of the cottages, and frighten the life out of some stout old ladies residing in them, and who imagine it to be an uprising of the Mexican greasers, who live higher up the canon.

And what extraordinary people you meet there, and what tales are told under the old live oak tree in the garden after dinner, of cattle driving and gold finding in the old days, of highway robberies and encounters with grizzlies, but generally culminating in that all-absorbing topic, the “Almighty dollar,” arguing as to how much Jay Gould and Vanderbilt are worth, or 86 whether Mackay made fifty, or only fifteen, million dollars out of the Comstock mines. It is astonishing to find what pleasure an American takes in talking about or pointing out some rich man. I remember with what awe I gazed on a homely looking man eating baked pig's feet in a Chicago hotel, who was said to be worth twenty-five million dollars. Here almost everything depends on what man is worth. I have never had a man pointed out to me as a clever painter, a poet, or a soldier, but I have had scores of men shown to me, in breathless whispers, as worth so many millions of dollars. I don't know why I should laugh at them for it; I don't blame them; everything—honour, position, and place—rests on their being first in the race for gold.

But to return to the mineral springs. In every county there are scores of the most valuable soda, iron, and sulphur springs, as thick on the ground as at Harrogate, though the 87 greater part of them are still unanalysed. I am glad, however, to say the State Legislature are having them put in order, and they will, in the future, when California becomes the great health resort of the Western States, be of the greatest value. In fact, several of them now are worth considerable sums of money, and were I an invalid who wished to live in a

delightful country, and to invest my capital there, I should buy one of the more important ones, with an absolute certainty of its being a success.

Another great source of profit in the future will be in raising fruit. Fresh fruit of course does not fetch much, but if it can be combined with “canning” and crystalising, a good profit may be realised. Oranges, lemons, and limes, planted in the proper place, must always be a good investment out West, as they can only be grown there, and the demand increases enormously, whilst olives, almonds, and walnuts, though more uncertain, yield enormous profits 88 if properly looked after. Californian wine is well known in Eastern markets, and is used, I believe, very extensively to blend with other wines. It is rather heady, and if you drink a bottle you have no cause to complain of “not getting any forruder.” In addition to this there is a large business in raisins. Down in Southern California, all sorts of fruits are grown—oranges, apples, lemons, pears, figs, plums, apricots, almonds, quinces, prunes, pomegranates, peaches, and limes. Of course all these require an intimate knowledge of their treatment, with careful culture and attention. But no wonder they grow so well with the delightful climate.

The day we drove from Parso del Robles to San Luis Obispo we started in the middle of the day in an open buggy, with the thermometer 110° Fahr. in the shade. We had a most enjoyable drive through lovely valleys and mountains, to take the steamer to return to San Francisco by water, and we had less inconvenience 89 in that enormous heat than when the thermometer stands at 90° in New York.

I left the Golden State with great regret. My first plan was to go from San Francisco to New Orleans straight, but I was afterwards advised to travel down through Mexico to Vera Cruz, and for the sake of the sea voyage, take the steamer to New York. It is a long journey even down to El Paso del Norte—the junction where you strike the Mexican Central Railway,—and you may say it is devoid of interest. But at the same time it is an experience. After you leave Goshen the line runs through the usual endless hills of rocky sand and alkali plains, and you have a foretaste of the interminable cactus, which you

get used to after passing through it for seven or eight days. At first it is slightly interesting and then it becomes irritating. You think this cannot go on for long, even cactus must have an end; but no, it is simply cactus and nothing but cactus, some round fat cactus, 90 some long lean cactus, crooked cactus, and straight cactus, and you are glad when Los Angeles is neared, and it disappears. But, alas, only for a time. Here we get the pleasant intelligence that the bridge over the Colorado river has been burnt down, and there is 30 miles of “washouts” beyond. Luckily someone kindly repairs the bridge in time for us to go over, and on the morning of the third day we find ourselves in Arizona.

I think I explained in one of my previous letters that a “washout” is where a large body of water suddenly descends down one of the dried up gulches, and sweeps all before it; it may only run for an hour, but all the same, everything is washed away. I have seen enormous iron bridges carried a quarter of a mile down the river, and yet when the train comes a few hours later, nothing is to be seen but a tiny rivulet. These “washouts” have been very frequent in this State this year.

91

Arizona has long enjoyed the reputation of being the “toughest” State in the Union, and let me explain what the word “tough” in the West means. Well, it is difficult to say what it means, but you must suppose a combination of gamblers, thieves, cut-throats, and cow-herders of the worst description. Naturally, in the Eastern States any murder in Arizona is put down to the “cowboys,” and for the sake of the uninitiated I may say that “cowboys” are the men who watch and herd the vast flocks of cattle that roam over the feeding-grounds in that part. A “cowboy” is not necessarily a young man, as his name might imply, but he is often a veteran; neither is it necessary to suppose that all “cowboys” are “toughs.” Of course they have gained a reputation for being “toughs” because they do occasionally participate in shooting rows, and also because the “cowboy,” if he has any sense of dignity, never goes around without a “shooter,” or, as they 92 call it, a “gun,” and a large belt of cartridges. At the same time I should not like to paint them as the most peaceable of citizens. They are out sometimes for a month without tasting a drop of liquor, and when

they do get any whisky they are apt to shoot without caring much where their bullet has its billet. Some nine months ago a party of “toughs” attacked and robbed a store at Bisbee, near Tombstone, killing four men, but met with their deserts, four being hung and a fifth lynched, his swinging body somewhat astonishing the President of a large copper mine, who had come down that day from Boston to inspect his property.

The Apache Indians and “cowboys” and “toughs” in general render wearing a “shooter” when out in the country an absolute necessity. Some people sneer at it as bravado, but there is a saying, and a true saying in those parts, that you may not want a revolver for years, but when you do want it you want it badly!

93

One of the most interesting and beautiful sights I saw in Arizona was the mirage. We were crossing a perfectly level plain of sand, and looking out of the car window I saw the most delightful and enchanting lake I could imagine. I did not for a moment suspect what it was. I only wondered how there could be such a lake in such a terribly dry dusty spot, for not a drop of water had we seen for hundreds of miles, but yet there it was rippling, and breaking on the sandy shore, with the mountains reflected in the water, and cactus-growing islands in the middle. I was only wishing that the train would stop, when the coloured porter said, “Guess you ain't seen that often,” and I then learnt, what it was. Some people may imagine it took a stretch of fancy to make one's self believe it was a lake, but I can assure them that it took a very hard stretch to make one's self believe it was not; two ladies in the car, one of them, by-the-bye, a U.S. female detective, were deceived, and could 94 hardly be persuaded that the lovely vision they had seen was really a delusion. I shall never forget it, it looked like fairy-land, and I can easily understand the thirsty dirt-begrimed traveller on the old Mexican stages being driven almost mad when he saw these fresh waters, whilst he himself was choked to death as he flogged his weary horses through the sand.

After crossing the Colorado river at Guma, said to be the hottest spot in North America, the mercury sometimes touching 130° in the shade, we passed through a terribly sterile country—low hills of rocky sand, and that beastly cactus, stretching for five hundred miles. Occasionally, say every two hundred miles, one passes a little town consisting of a few greasers' houses, some Americans, and the inevitable gin mill and gambling saloons. At other places you pull up in the middle of a desert to take water from an artesian well, where there lives only the man who tends the engine, or perhaps a cowboy, 95 boy, who, in his big hat, and armed to the teeth, gets on board for an old paper.

After passing Tueson, quite a little town, and Benson, we get into the region where lately there has been so much trouble. There is an Apache reservation near, and a body of these have been on the war path for some time. Over a hundred ranchers and settlers have been killed within the last year. Their plan of operations is as follows:—They split up into bands of from eighteen to twenty, and leaving the reservation, make for the Mexican frontier, crossing the railway, as a rule, near Deming. They do not attack openly, but pounce down on some wretched rancher and murder him, and not being burdened with any impedimenta, they strike off to the Sierra Madre, travelling as much as sixty or seventy miles in one night, and by the time the news reaches the nearest settlement, it is next to useless to follow them. The day after I passed they cut the wires and 96 murdered the telegraph operator some fifteen miles West of Deming. Things are really very serious. Of course the State hushes it up, as it prevents emigrants from coming, but what makes the settlers so mad is, that if any Indians are caught they are usually escorted back to the reservation, whilst if a “cowboy” murders anyone he is tried for his life. Some day the settlers will rise and go into the reservation, and there will be a bloody reckoning with innocent and guilty alike. The State is, I believe, really trying to gain a good name, and it is absurd that so many lives should be lost on account of a sickly sentimentality which some Americans feel towards the “noble red man.”

The United States Government have a quantity of men supposed to be pursuing them, but the general idea is that as the men receive 28s. a day pay and their rations, they are in no hurry to catch them. I see, however, that the Apaches shot five cavalry men a short time since, 97 which will probably stir up a little activity. Shortly after leaving Deming we arrive at that most extraordinary frontier town, El Paso del Norte. I say extraordinary, because it is a typical American frontier town. Here there is most chance for a man to make money quickly. Wages are high, the greater part of the people work for themselves. Here come all the desperadoes from Texas, Arizona, and the South Western States. The town boasts the highest civilization and the lowest rowdyism; the finest hotels stand next to the worst gambling dens; shooting used to be rampant, averaging three a week, and even when I was there two inoffensive men were shot dead. All the “cowboys” come here when they go on the spree, in fact you find, if you wish, the same sort of thing that existed in the Western States before they were quieted down. It is built on the Rio Grande del Norte, which at one time was a large and deep river. I have seen pictures depicting 98 boats on it, but it is a small stream flowing between long shores of sand. It is the junction for the Mexican Central Railway which has been built some three years, and from which the town practically dates its commencement. Money is to be made in a comparatively limited way in El Paso—which has all the push of a thriving town, and is American to the backbone, has no past but a great future, and is the gate to old Mexico.

FROM THE RIO GRANDE TO THE TROPICS.

NO one, who has ever read the annals of Mexico, can deny that they form one of the most interesting and exciting histories of semi-civilized countries. Unfortunately only slight traditions are left of the aborigines; Toltecs, Chichimecs, and all sorts of other tribes are lost in obscurity. The only people about whom anything seems to be known are the Aztecs, who appeared about A.D. 1196; their capital occupied the same site as the present

one; their palaces and ruins are to be found, if you care to look for them, in various parts of the country; but to the ordinary traveller Mexico seems to date her greatness from the arrival of Cortes in the sixteenth century. Poor Cortes, after being driven out, died in Spain, and then came a succession of changes, fights, revolutions, and executions, which have lasted up to the present time. Every nation seems to have made it their business to try their hands at governing Mexico.

Iturbide was made an Emperor, only to abdicate, and was eventually shot. A Republic was formed; then came a constitution similar to the United States; a long list of Presidents succeed each other, some of whom held office only for a few weeks, whilst others are elected time after time. Spaniards are turned out, the great Santa Anna is head during the war with France in '38 and '45 and not having had a serious wax for some time, (consequent on the annexation of 101 Texas,) they engage with the United States. Santa Fè is captured, and they are defeated at Buena Vista by General Taylor; General Scott landing at Vera Cruz takes the City of Mexico, and so the ball is kept rolling. Sometimes they were busy sequestrating the property of the Church, and when not engaged in internal troubles, they secured the attention of the whole of Europe, who after negotiating, fighting, disclaiming, protesting, and generally disagreeing amongst themselves, placed the unfortunate Maximilian on the throne, who, unconscious of his fate, attempted to give to Mexico more freedom than perhaps it ever had before, but, poor man, he only succeeded in meeting with all manner of opposition, and was eventually shot at Queretaro.

Why do not Americans, instead of pursuing the meretricious dissipations of Europe, visit Mexico; it was, previous to the last three years, a comparatively unvisited place. The only way, 102 of reaching the capital was by steamer to Vera Cruz, and then by rail to Mexico; but now there is a railway through the heart of the country, enabling one to see an original people. It is not, as yet, Americanized; there are no fine hotels, or saloons, or advertising;

you see no Americans loafing and spitting about the stations; you only see the Mexican in all his primitiveness, ragged perhaps, careless of the gold if you will, but naturally polite, not prying into other people's affairs, hungry, but content, and regarding the Americans with a repugnance that an old and impoverished people will always feel towards a pushing, thriving neighbour.

On paper Mexico enjoys one of the most perfect Republican constitutions, but in reality it is nothing of the sort, the Government being worked by a few swells at Mexico city. The country, generally speaking, is owned by large landed proprietors, who, in some instances, are only too willing to sell, but they have, unfortunately 103 for them, no opportunity of dealing direct with genuine purchasers, but only too often find themselves in the hands of middlemen who not only do the proprietor, but also the purchaser; any man buying land in Mexico ought to be most careful. I know instances of young Englishmen, totally ignorant of ranching, investing their money, only to find that either water or grass or both are absent, to say nothing of their ranche being subject to raids from hostile Apaches, or the title utterly valueless.

Directly an Englishman appears at El Paso and gives people to understand he wishes to invest a sum of money in a ranche, he is infested with sharpers of every kind; they will sell him a ranche with the best of “gramma,” grass, water all the year round; a perfect climate, with railway conveniences, and free from Indians,—in fact, a spot where you not only “get rich while you sleep,” but also grow fat whilst you are awake; yet alas! most of this fades away on 104 near acquaintance and inspection. Carefully bought, a cattle ranche in Mexico ought to and will pay, but anyone wishing to put money into it should first live there a few months, say nothing about his money, and watch his chance. But to go there and proclaim that you have a large sum to put in land,—well, you are certain to be robbed. Still, as I said before, there are some fair ranches now in the market in Northern Mexico, and you can buy a million acres now from a Mexican gentleman who wishes to sell a portion of his estate in order to stock the rest.

The same may be said as to mining; you may be an expert, and then get taken in. I believe just lately a few mines have been paying, but I think I am right in saying that a great number are not worked at all. I have seen flaming advertisements in England setting forth that the rubbish thrown away by the Mexicans, if only treated in a proper manner, will yield enormous returns. It may be so, 105 but what I look at is that Mexicans have worked silver for three hundred years, whilst we have been there about thirty. I should say they know a great deal more about it than we. I went down with one of the most practical mining engineers in the States, and, as he said, some mines, no doubt, might pay, but by the time you have carried the machinery across, perhaps fifty miles of mountain, on mule back, and also probably pumped the mine dry, it would be a different thing to working a mine with only the paeons to pay, at the rate of perhaps five pence a day. It is very easy to say in the prospectus that such and such a mine has given out so many millions of dollars, but they do not say how much was spent in getting it: and again, one must remember that one hears, at every turn, if there is a successful mine, but how much money has been lost of which one hears nothing? It is like a Louisiana State Lottery,—the lucky man's name is on every tongue; no one mentions the 106 thousands of disappointed ones; of course everyone knows some Mexican mines pay, but I would say, unless you are on the spot and know all about it, put your brass into something else.

The paeons in Mexico are the labouring classes; they are in a truly wretched condition. The whole country, with the exception of a few—a very few—enormously wealthy people, living principally near Mexico, is in the same condition. These paeons are mostly employed by the large farmers, who cultivate what little ground is under the plough. You may say they belong, body and soul, clothes, house, and wife, to their master, who lives in the square block of buildings, surrounded by its white walls, which one sees from the cars. From a distance these blocks look very pretty, the buildings are of that pure, glistening white, one only sees in such a climate, and the tower of the little church, which every “hacienda” has within its walls, helps to relieve the peculiar squareness of the 107 houses. This squareness can only be likened to a large white brick; with the exception of the tower,

nothing is to be seen inside the great white walls, stockyard, paeons' huts, proprietor's house, the well, everything is inside, but you see nothing except the wall, which gives the place a fortified look, and often they are fortified, in fact the only decent-sized mill near Mexico has cannon and a small regiment of soldiers, and needs it too. Even whilst I was there, a revolution broke out, and a detachment of soldiers was sent to quell it, but only succeeded in fomenting a revolution amongst themselves, so that two more detachments had to be sent, one for the people and the other for the soldiers; I met the unruly soldiers being brought back to prison. Although these farms may be dirty inside, they form a very pretty picture in the landscape, surrounded by the greenest fields, whilst scattered around are the wretched paeons ploughing with oxen, their plough consisting of 108 literally a crooked stick, and yet with this primitive husbandry, the crops are enormous.

The paeons have about ninepence a day in good places, and this is, for them, a high wage, whereas the white man over the border gets eight or ten shillings and his board and lodging, and then of course he never tastes meat, and has, I suppose, the most simple food that man eats. His wife gets a little Indian corn and grinds it on a stone, mixes it with water, and throws it on the fire; this, with a chili, constitutes his entire meal. At night he sleeps huddled on the floor of his miserable hut, or in the open air; I have seen scores of them from the railway in the mountains, when it was almost freezing, just squatting down with nothing on but a ragged shirt and pants and a dirty zareppe, a sort of blanket, worn true Spanish fashion over their shoulders.

But to return to Del Norte, the little Mexican town on the other side of the Rio Grande. It is essentially Mexican; directly you 109 cross the footbridge and pass the sleepy-looking custom-house officers, you feel that it is quite a different place to the bustling self-asserting town on the other side of the water. Like all Mexican towns, its chief characteristic is its *plaza* and its Church. The latter is built of *adobe* , those sun-dried mud bricks of which all the missions in Southern California were built, and which, though built by the same people, are never found in Mexico proper, with the, I believe, sole exception of this little lost town. It seems queer that all the turmoil and bustle on the other side of the river should not have

disturbed this curious place; its inhabitants do not seem to trouble themselves much as to what is going on; they live in their squalid dirty-looking houses, surrounded by luxuriant, unkempt gardens, whilst it is difficult to say whether there are more children or fowls in their houses.

One of the great bugbears of travelling in Mexico is the custom house. Only a few months 110 ago it was worse than it is now; every little State had separate custom houses, and you were pulled out of the train every few hundred miles to have your baggage examined; the system was no doubt kept up to find places for a crowd of hungry politicians, but now they are all abolished except the frontier custom house and the examination when you enter the City of Mexico. But at the stone time, they are very strict on the frontier. During my travels, I had collected a quantity of stuff, which hardly came under the head of personal effects, and as the duty is sixty to a hundred per cent., I hardly knew what to do. Luckily I made the chance aquaintance of a man who seemed to know the whims and ways of the potentates who ransack your baggage. Are you travelling for pleasure? says he. Partly for pleasure and partly for business. Are you an English lord? No, said I. Pity says he. Why? says I. Well, if you were, I guess you would get through without 111 much trouble, but if you say you are travelling for business, then they will think you want to sell these things in Mexico; say-guess you'd better be a lord. Well, I'll be anything you like sooner than pay five or six hundred dollars duty. Well, says he, just you go and get fixed up kinder smart, and I guess we'll work it. That was all very well, but what was I to do? I had not the remotest idea, as to what kind of “fixing” would enable me to appear in the character of a blue blooded bondholder. However, I must do something, or else pay five hundred dollars for looking like trade, I had on a filthy suit and a cow-boys hat; I unearthed a billycock, had my boots blacked, shaved, bought a clean pair of cuffs, and with the assistance of my ingenious friend, hired a carriage and pair of greys, and I flatter myself there wasn't a man in Texas who was better got up than I was. Need I say I was successful; whether the carriage, or the cuffs, 112 did it, I don't know, but the result was undeniable. Japanese costumes were explained away as being dressing gowns without

which no real English nobleman thinks of travelling. Curiosities were presents for high and influential personages, whilst the most elegant lacquer boxes were only receptacles for carrying my ties. The circulars certainly were suspicious, though I think I must have been saved, owing to their mistaking the vignette of the works for the Baronial Castle! I really think, had I only been firm, I might have got something out of them as a reward for my honouring them with my presence in their benighted country. As it was, I was only too glad to get out of their clutches, and prepare for what I knew would be a long and dusty journey, by laying in a stock of bottled beer, which I regret to say, in consequence of my making pals with a party of thirsty cow-boys, only lasted one night.

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A great nuisance in Mexico is, that there is practically speaking, no gold, or paper, and one is obliged to carry all ones cash on ones person in Mexican dollars, that is to say, unless you have a draft on Mexico. The best way to do this, is to carry it in a belt round your waist; there are some very good belts which hold your money, and shooter, and cartridge; you can carry it in a bag, but you have in that case either to chain it to you, or continually keep your eye on it, which is next to impossible, as you have to get out three times a day to feed, and if you take your bag with you, every one in the car thinks you have untold gold on you. Every one on the train carries a revolver, and a large belt of cartridges. The cow-boys have formidable looking weapons a foot long, whilst the train men have small ones. It is better to carry arms, and if you are in a strange town, let them be seen.

The first town we arrived at, after 114 travelling all night, was Chihuahua. It lies some way from the railway, like many of the Mexican towns. It is up near the Sierra Madre, and is notable, principally, I think, for being the rendezvous of all the blackguards who cross the frontier. They seem to be a bloody lot here. Only a short time since the natives made a raid against the Apaches, and returned carrying their heads in triumph, on poles, and still later, a fortnight ago, two perfectly innocent Americans were killed by Mexican banditti.

We still travel through the same style of country as was Arizona, only the cactus seems to get thicker and more variegated. The only really interesting cactus is Mescal, which bears a little red fruit, costing about ten cents a hundred, and which only a Mexican knows how to peel. He kneels at your feet with a basket full, and you eat as fast as he peels. It resembles a small beetroot, and I think is called “tuna”; but I ate so many different fruits it is quite 115 impossible to remember all. Occasionally, after rounding one of the low hills, a brilliant landscape will burst on one, and you wonder why all the country is not like this. For a few miles everything is green and under cultivation; the little town, with a picturesque Moorish Church to apparently every five or ten houses, appears to be all that could be desired. And then all of a sudden you find yourself plunged again into desolation and cactus. It is a constantly recurring puzzle as to whether Mexico is the most smiling, luxuriant, plentiful country you ever saw, or the most infernal, detestable wilderness man was at any time compelled to traverse.

Gradually we begin to climb the mountains and get into the mining regions; my engineering friend's keen eye soon picking out the places where they had tried for silver. He was on his way to inspect a mine some sixty miles from Zacatecas, and was kind enough to invite me to 116 accompany him. I only wish I had, as, strange enough, I struck him again on my return, and his adventures were most unheard of. I shall never forget his description of his start, carrying a sword and two revolvers, which, not being man of war, he did not even load.

Perhaps Zacatecas is the town that strikes the traveller more than anything else he sees in Mexico; it is the first thoroughly Mexican town he sees. The extraordinary clearness of the air, the beautiful tints of the houses, the whole marvellous combination of color —you never see a false colour in Mexico,—the walls, the dresses of the women, and different costumes of the men, even the rags of the wretched paeons, all seem to have been touched up by some artistic hand. Everything is so brilliant, and yet so delicate and soft.

We go down into the streets, passing the innumerable sellers of strange fruits and still stranger sweets down the little narrow dirty 117 streets—(if you wish to retain a pleasant recollection of Zacatecas keep to the bird's eye view, do not penetrate into its domestic economy)—passing flocks (I know no better word) of sedate donkeys carrying all sorts of things—water, stones, corn, merchandise. Everything in this country is carried by donkeys, who are stimulated by ragged little boys; and great is the commotion in the little public way when a flock, carrying, let us say, stones, meets one carrying hay, as the hungry stone-carriers snatch a hasty breakfast from their country cousins.

There is a strange way they clean their streets in this unusual town. A second flock, not of donkeys this time, but of men—hardly less beasts of burden—with little short brushes, bent double; (the men not the brushes) grub in every corner. They also are driven on by an individual who apparently had spent sometime in a Mexican Billingsgate; and still another flock—the saddest of all—flocks of convicts, ragged, fed 118 on a handful of Indian corn and water; dirty, shoeless, footsore, kept at a trot all day, carrying huge blocks of wood, and urged on by mounted soldiers with drawn swords and bayonets. Surely had I my choice of the three flocks, I should choose the first.

We go to the Zacatecano, quite a clean place, where we have a delicious wash, and a still more delicious cup of Mexican chocolate, and then sally forth to see the town, and do some shopping; but there is nothing to buy, and nothing much to do; so after haggling over the price of an old hand worked revolver case—you always haggle over everything here—we stroll up the hill into the old tumble down cemetery, with its quaint fantastic tombstones; on the top of some of which are the polished skulls of defunct Mexicans, one of which my American friend wished to annex, doubtless to shew to his admiring friends in Jersey City. However, I prevailed upon him to 119 let the head of the defunct swell rest in peace. I couldn't help laughing, it was such a thoroughly American idea.

I was sorry to leave the old burying ground, and return to the gilded ginger-bread Pullmancar; it seemed such a change, but it does not do to be too romantic in a place

when there is only one train in a day, so I and the skull snatcher had to tear ourselves away. If Zacatecas was picturesque on entering, it was doubly so on leaving—a bird's-eye view of the whole town met our eyes. In the distance lay the equally lovely village of Guadalupe, situated in the most fertile valley I ever saw, and possessing one of the most beautiful churches in Mexico. Troops of donkeys were being driven round and round in the valley, mixing up the silver and chemicals, whilst trains of their brethren kicked up clouds of dust on the winding white roads, carrying the precious ore to the smelting furnaces; the men riding on their necks, with 120 their knees up to their chins, reminding one strongly of the pictures one sees of scenes in the Holy Land. It was a good thing, however, we were allowed to enjoy this almost unequalled scene, without a foreknowledge of the amusements in store for us.

Immediately after leaving Zacatecas we plunged into the usual desert of cactus and stones, but sixty miles south we found ourselves at a bad “washout,” whilst three others were further on. The worst of a washout is no one exactly knows how long one may stop. The train can't go back as another train might come up the other side and exchange passengers. So there we were. My small stock of beer and canned stuff soon gave out, so the coal contractor for the line and myself went down the line to see if we could strike anything to eat. We soon found a dozen dirty grass huts shaped like umbrellas, but the Indians had nothing to eat. Yes, there was a live turkey, but it was 121 sold to the chief bridge mender for five dollars. At last, to my great joy, we found one of them had some beef, *i.e.* , raw beef cut in strips and dried in the sun—a Sunday dish for a Mexican Indian. They also made us some tortillas, and I found some coffee at the bottom of my basket and a tin of prawns, so we invited another passenger and the conductor to dinner, and I assure you afterwards, with a cigarette, I felt as if I had dined at Delmonico's. But the days were awfully monotonous, there we were in a desert; now what can you do in a desert? Not a thing, except watch the crowd of paeons working at the bridge for us to go over. Fancy the Lancashire and Yorkshire bridge over the Calder breaking down, and being obliged to sit down on the Heath footpath till it was mended. The thing seemed too

absurd. Gradually we had an encampment of people, who brought us milk and bread from the towns, and tinned sardines. Imagine sardines and bread and bad 122 brandy, subsequently a detachment of ragged cavalry came on the field. I wanted to hire a mule team and go on to Aquas Calientes, but was assured I should be robbed and perhaps murdered, so I stuck to the sardines and bad brandy. At length, on the evening of the third day, just as the crowd was seeing the last round between a telegraph operator and his Mexican mistress, whistlings were heard from the South, and we saw the headlight of the long wished for locomotive. As it came near it stopped for a moment to pick up some of the officials, and a, dash was made for the flat cars by the horde of paeons to ride back the two miles to the washout. I made a dash too, but owing to the darkness and the vigorous competition for seats I was launched somewhat unexpectedly into space, and then up to my neck in water; and worse still, as I struck for the shore I nearly broke my arm against the bank, it was rather deep, but only a few yards across. It might 123 have been a mile for the fright I got. I ran all the way to the cars, heartily cursing washouts and everything connected with them.

It is only on an occasion like this that one discovers the meanness of some people; the porter taking pity on my condition, hinted that one of the passengers had a large bottle of good whiskey, and I discovered that this same passenger was the viper we had been cherishing on jerked beef and bad brandy—truly a villain with a smiling face.

We got settled in the new train at last, and some hours afterwards arrived at Aquas Calientes, famous, as its name implies, for its hot springs.

Here we had the first decent meal we had obtained since I left San Francisco; and here we got a taste of the numberless fruits that come up from the tropics; there were lots of oranges, lemons, citrons, and pines, also a large fruit like the green wax apples that adorn the mantel-shelves 124 of sea-side lodging-houses, inside which was a sort of gooseberry jelly, and called, I think, grenadita. But perhaps the strangest was a fruit which resembled mayonaise, and, mixed with pepper and salt, made the most appetizing salad.

In appearance it was not unlike butter. We had to tear ourselves away from these good things to continue our journey, which had been a gradual descent of about two thousand feet since leaving the mining regions of Zacatecas.

At Leon and Silao, they bring you handsful of opals, gathered by the Indians in the neighbouring hills, and worth from fifty cents to five dollars a piece. You must be careful, as they are only too ready to “put up a job” on a stranger. Then we began the steep climb up to the Mexican plateau. Here the scenery changed a little. For a time we left the cactus, and the spots of cultivation, with their glistening white 125 haciendas, and got into a tract of mountainous country, the low hills covered with close grass, on which herds of Mexican cattle were feeding. Every now and then we saw bands of horses, one of them nearly bringing us to grief. I just happened to look out of the car window, and saw a mixed band of donkeys, horses, and mules driven close to the track. The trail they were following crossed our track at what we should call a level crossing. The whole band, catching sight of the cars, started off at a mad galop. There, could not have been less than three hundred, and it was a race for life with us, as well as them, as to who should reach the crossing first. The few “vaqueros” with them were helpless. We rushed on to the outside platform and held the handrail, to say nothing of our breath; and only just beat them, the leading horses getting to the crossing as we thundered by. We were going down hill, forty miles an hour. The whole band seemed to be thrown 126 on a heap—horses and mules seemingly piled up one on the top of the other. It was lucky squeak, as we must have “jumped the track” if we had gone into them. It was a difficult piece of country for the driver, being thickly grazed, and going down hill it was impossible to avoid all the stock on the line. The donkeys are far the worst; you can't frighten them off with the whistle, and if you slow-up, they trot quietly on in front of the engine, in some cases actually being caught up on the cow-catcher, and carried along unhurt. Then the train has to be pulled-up, and the angry stoker gets down and twists their tails.

At last we reach Marques, the highest point, eight thousand one hundred and thirty two feet above the sea, a great, fine, wild stretch of country, extending for miles on all sides.

The atmosphere reminded me of the Scotch highlands more than anything I can think of. I should have liked to have stopped up there for a 127 week. What untamed looking men they were living there. One wild boy who came on the train to sell goats' milk, at a little station where we took in wood, was carried off for twenty miles, by mistake, and cowered in a corner of the Pullman, the magnificence of which would be told to many of his wondering friends when he returned to his home.

Our descent (about eight hundred feet, to get to Mexico,) took us through the roughest valley that I ever saw. There was not a square inch of ground that was not covered with the most cruel brush imaginable; but it got more interesting later on, when we struck the remains of the canal by which, a few hundred years ago, the Mexicans tried to drain the valley of Mexico; it is an extraordinary work, (I forget how many thousands of men toiled at this colossal undertaking) and is cut clean through an enormous mountain. I may be wrong, but I think at one time, some twenty-five 128 thousand Indians found employment here. When short of money, they stopped for a hundred years or so, the work being taken up by their grandchildren. Much of the masonry is still there; they must have had some good county bridge-surveyors in those days; but they got their levels wrong, or something; at any rate, they never drained the valley. Travelling alongside the canal for some time, we enter on the plateau of Mexico.

Being rather excited after our week's journey, we strain our eyes to get the first glimpse of the most beautiful capital in the world. We had a pleasant party, and felt sorry to break up, but as Mexico is not a big place, we all meet again at the Iturbide or the San Carlos in spite of the entreaties of the gentleman who hands the following card:—“Are you looking for appartements, come to the Grate Barding Hous. Daccomadation for one hundred of persons. All kinds of milkis at from 8, 10, 12 129 Reals a day, according to situations of appartements. I make known to persons of Europe that I beared the same business at Cuba, Cienfugos, etc., etc.”

We resisted him. Even a variety of milkis (meals) at 8, 10, 12 Reals a-day did not tempt us, and we went to the San Carlos.

I am afraid I shall only be able to give but a dim idea of the beauties of the City of Mexico. When the original founder of Mexico came to this benighted country, he was told by someone who does not appear by name in the legend, that he was to found his capital where he discovered an eagle with a snake in its mouth, seated on a cactus. Eagles, snakes, and cactuses being then, as now, more particularly the latter, fairly common, he was not long before he detected the King of Birds, perched on this particular vegetable. The only marvel is he got as far as he did. If this mud-loving fowl of the air had only established himself two miles 130 further on, Mexico would have been situated on the finest conceivable site for city. It would have had drainage and cellars, and have been free from malaria; but no, this unsanitary bird chose to sit on a cactus on the very edge of either Lake Texcoco or Lake Xochimilco, and in consequence the town suffers from bad drainage and malaria. The only thing that saves Mexico is its height—eight thousand feet above the sea. On the top of this plateau, just where the city is, there is a valley which you may say consists of a few large lakes, and right in the middle of them is Mexico. The result is that there is absolutely no drainage. The sewage just lies in the suburban streets, and outside the town; somewhat in the fashion of the fens in Lincolnshire; as a consequence the inhabitants are subject to low fever. With the exception of this, and small-pox (which is looked on with less dread than a bad cold with us), it is the most healthy city I know. There 131 are no variations of the temperature, which is just hot enough in the day, and just refreshing, not cold, at night. Can I say it, after what I said before? It excels even California in climate. A peculiarity is, as I was informed, that there is not a fireplace (with the exception of those used for cooking) in the whole of Mexico.

The first thing to do after the long and dusty journey, is to go and have a Russian bath at the Banos del Factor, where I had a battle royal with the bath-room man about the charges —the first of many mistakes I made—not knowing either the language or the coinage. The

man was perfectly right, and I had a capital steam bath, and a cup of coffee and cigarette, for a moderate sum. There were two things that struck me forcibly on leaving the bath. First, it was broad day-light when I went in; I only stayed in three-quarters of an hour, and when I came out it was pitch dark. I had forgotten that there was no twilight. The 132 second was, the strange quiet that reigned in the streets,there being no street-cries or shouting. The crowds seemed to shuffle past in a mysteriously pathetic manner. I say these two things struck me. I ought to say they were the first to strike me, for so many things struck me, it was almost impossible to put them down.

The San Carlos is situated at the corner of the Calleo San Francisco and the Coliseo Viejo. It is built like nearly all the better Mexican houses, with an open courtyard in the centre, and galleries, ranging round, which are the rooms. Need I say that, after the American houses,they are extremely comfortless. The most ordinary conveniences were absent. The other leading house is the Iturbide, built, I think, by a strange lady, who designed it with a view of preventing her heirs living in it. It was inhabited some short time as a palace, by the transient emperor after whom it is named. The living is shocking compared to New York. The best, to 133 my mind, is at the Hotel del Cafe Anglais. The restaurant is situate in the usual open courtyard in the hotel. Some prefer the Concordia; but there is not much difference.

A rather nice way is to take one of the little rustic arbors round the gardens of some of the restaurants, and have your meals served there. A continuous stream of little boys and girls pass round, selling oranges, and different fruits, and, when the proprietor is not looking, beg for bread and scraps. It is impossible to get any substantial breakfast; all you have in the morning is coffee and bread, or a cup of that celebrated chocolate which can only be got in Mexico. It is delicious in flavour, and whipped into a thick foam. I wonder Cadbury doesn't get hold of the secret; it would make him a. second fortune.

In the morning we pass up the comparatively modernized Calle de Plateros, strike into the Plaza Major, and here the most beautiful 134 sight we shall see in this charming

city greets us. The grand old Cathedral, with its peculiar whitey-grey colour, and its friezes, statues, and basso-relievos of white marble, stands out against the clear blue sky. No wonder an ignorant impressionable race like the Indian-Mexicans are influenced by religion when their House of God is such a stately edifice. You may enter the Plaza every day, still your eyes will always turn to that glorious pile. Part Doric, part Ionic, its height appears enormous; it seems in fact a collection of huge churches. The towers are indeed colossal, so are the statues, the portales, balustrades, and buttresses, all forming one gigantic structure, and all carved and worked out in the most delicate manner. The whole is crowned by a large and massive dome, and this is surmounted by an exquisite lantern. The length of the building inside the thick walls is some four hundred feet, and the great bell, the Santa 135 Maria Guadalupe, is twenty feet high. The approximate cost of building it was some two million dollars. And yet, with all its vast extent and its architectural features, it would not have the same effect if it were not for the clear atmosphere, the peculiar light and blue blueness. (if I may use the words) of the sky.

On the opposite side the plaza is flanked by the Palacio Nacional, built on the land once given to Cortez,—a long, rather low, picturesque line of buildings, not unlike some of the public buildings in Paris. Inside is a series of courts, and round the entrance stand the dirty looking sentinels—ragged and unshaven, filthy in their soiled uniforms, with no shoes, but a coarse sort of sandal, and when they march, they shuffle along in a disorganised way, like criminals go on the way to gaol. The other sides of the square are occupied by the Portales or arcades, under which the footpath passes, and which footpath is occupied by the sellers of a hundred-and-one 136 curious articles—bridles, pistol-pouches, fancy zareppes, sombreros, sweet-stuff, cigarettes, and matches. These are the men who will trade for half an hour over a medio, (12 ½ cents). They always ask at least four times more than they expect. For my zareppe—a handsome shawl of its kind, and for which I gave sixteen dollars—I was originally asked fifty. I walked straight out of the store, followed by the merchant shouting in Spanish. I turned round, and held up ten fingers; he regarded me with disgust, and I never went near him for two days. I then sauntered past his shop,

and pretended I did not even recognise the place; but the rascal knew me, and flew out of his den. I offered him then only eight dollars. We haggled as well as we could by signs, and at last he came down to twenty. I left him for two more days, eventually securing it for sixteen. This was no particular struggle, as, with all but the most respectable stores, you have to bargain, or pay five or six times too much.

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Near the Cathedral is the flower market; a place to spend hours in. A hundred new flowers, of the most indescribably soft tints and lovely shades, and of the most extremely delicate hues, tempt one to buy. Never have I seen, nor ever do I expect to see again such a lovely collection of tender colouring. There is no wonder you never see anything inartistic in Mexico. Look at the masses of market women in their rags, sitting round in little groups on the plaza. Where else can one see such a wonderful wealth of colour? Even the paeons in their white shirts and trousers, have a bright bit of stuff round their waists; but a bright bit with just the trespassing brightness rubbed off.

Go to the end of the Portal de los Flores, and look down the Calle de Zaragoza, or the Porta Coeli. There is the Seven Dials of Mexico. The stench is abominable, and nearly all the 138 people seem to be marked with small pox, though walking about in convalescent stages, yet one forgets all these disadvantages, being absorbed in admiration of the marvellous collection of colour shown up by the white walls of the houses, and the blue sky beyond; whilst on a feast day, and when the band plays in the Alameda or the plaza, the Mexican countryman will mostly demonstrate to you his love of finery. He is now indeed a swell, with his silver mounted saddle, with its enormous peak in front and behind, with large stirrups and terrible looking silver spurs, with his silver lace and buttons on his pantaloons, whilst his worked leather jacket is quite a marvel of minute silver and leather work; and he crowns the whole with that typical sombrero, loaded with silver, two feet across the brim, and costing from twenty to a hundred dollars. At the same time he parades his courage by his sword, and silver and pearl-handled shooter. That is your 139 real Mexican. Now the high-toned men, from “away back,” as Jonathan would say,

have been educated in Europe, and dress rather like seedy looking Parisians, so do their wives, putting on the most extraordinary looking silks and satins, the patterns of which I remember seeing cut from the “Journal des Modes,” and placed in my scrap book in days when I kept one. Why do they not stay by their picturesque blue black dresses and the dignified but graceful mantilla, like their less fashionable sisters?

I should say there was more to be done in the way of sightseeing in Mexico than in any other city of its size in the world. Of course you visit the interior of the Cathedral. In the days of my extreme youth I consulted one of those learned gentlemen who for a trifling obligation examine your head and tell you which qualities should be encouraged and which repressed. The one, I remember, that in my case was most in want of stimulation was veneration 140 for the antique. I think this venerable craniologist in that case was right. I remember staying at Cologne without entering its Cathedral and had it not been perhaps for the advice of the corrector of my youthful mind, I might even have even left Mexico without going inside the magnificent building whose exterior impressed me so forcibly. I cannot give you much idea of the interior. It is an exaggeration of some of the large Roman Catholic Cathedrals seen on the Continent—more pictures, larger altars, more chapels, enormous masses of heavy gilt carving. It has a wooden floor, which rather spoils the effect of its solemnity. We also went round some of the other churches. I say some, as if I had gone round all I should have been there now, examining organs, stalls, silver handrails, and dingy paintings. I believe there are about seventy churches in the city, all of which have more or less long histories, but the exteriors of which redeem the interiors by 141 adding to the beauty of the city. Much interested as I was by the churches, there were other things to be seen—the Museums. I hate Museums worse, far worse, than old churches, but it had to be done. The collection of stuffed animals, &c., was amusing, the singular shapes the taxidermist had given some of the beasts were remarkable. There was also Maximilian's state coach, compared to which our Royal carriages are nothing, also a fine service of plate belonging to the unfortunate Emperor, and a quantity of other relics. We were accompanied round by a very dirty individual, who instead of showing us

Aztec relics and Indian curios paraded the monstrosities that are seen at shows at the seaside; for instance he would hustle us past some prehistoric ornaments or jewelry or the sacrificial stone to shew us a kid with two tongues, nor would he, in his ambition to point out a calf with seven legs, permit us to inspect the Indio Triste or the mode of waging warfare amongst the ancient Mexicans.

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Therefore my ideas of the Museo-Nacional are obscured by unnatural productions, otherwise I should have been glad to have given some further information on the really valuable ,collection of antiquities there. The Academia de Bellas Artes, is worth visiting, where are some good pictures by the old Mexican Masters, and also some reputed and real Murillos, an attributed Vandyke, and two by Teniers, and, as I thought the most striking, a possible Leonardo da Vinci. There are lots of other places to be seen in Mexico city. The Monte de Piedad (Pawn Shop), where you may perhaps pick up something worth buying.

One day was very interesting, or rather it appeared interesting to me. I don't suppose it was a bit interesting for the Mexicans; great preparations were made for a fair, and I expected to be able to purchase a lot of Mexican curiosities; but when I went round the stalls there was nothing but Death in all 143 his most horrible shapes—coffins, tombs, and skeletons, represented in card board or paper, in bread or biscuit. It seems that out of their many fete days they reserve one for the man on the Pale Horse, and they bring him in his various representations and place him on the tombs of their dead forbears.

The Alameda or public park is a fine one, on the way to the Paseo de la Reforma, a beautiful drive two miles long with double rows of trees on each side and ending up by the heights of Chapultepec, on the top of which stands a castle of the same name. The Paseo is the fashionable drive for the Mexicans in the afternoon. They drive very slowly in order to see and be seen; but as they, even in the height of summer, drive in close carriages it is difficult to see what object they have in view. Few better places could have

been chosen for a castle than this rocky eminence, standing out of the low-lying marshy land 144 around it, surrounded by a small forest of ahuehuetes, a species of cyprus, the most magnificent trees I have ever seen, dating from before the Conquest, and towering in a melancholy sort of way, like everything in Mexico, almost as high as the castle itself. Draped in hanging moss, they seem almost to be mourning for the past greatness of the country; not entirely past though, for the castle is now under repair as the summer residence of the President of the Republic.

What a view there is from Chapultepec! The luxuriant valley of Mexico stretches for miles on every side. At your feet is the city and its lakes; while far away in the distance tier upon tier of hills rise till they are crowned by the snow-capped summits of Popocatepetl and Ixtacci'hual—the two volcanoes which are first looked for and last remembered by anyone whose good fortune may lead him to Mexico.

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Of other excursions there are a score—to Tacubaya—where there are churches of course, a small palace, and a smaller Alameda, and some lovely garden-parks, where dwell the richer Mexicans. Molino del Rey, the mill where General Scott first turned the Mexicans before taking Chapultepec; Atzcapotzalco, where we buy earthernware jars for a cent. a piece (not a centre piece), is more peculiar to me for the time it takes to pronounce its name than for anything else I can remember about it, and last, but not least, to Guadalupe, where there is a charming view, a lovely church, notable for the solid silver rail round the altar, and for a variety of other curiosities. The church alone cost over a million of dollars, and its possessions in jewelry and plate, which long since have passed into Government hands, made up some two millions more. Here is a marvellous picture, which I did not see —a puzzle to Mexican artists to discover how it 146 was made. It is painted on a sort of canvas made from that interminable cactus, but there is still a doubt whether it is painted in oil or water color, and what it is beats the Devil and the good people of Guadalupe. According to the fable, one Juan Diego, a gentleman of Tolpetlac, saw a vision of the Virgin, who commanded him to go at once to the Bishop and tell him to build a cathedral,

as soon as he could, on the spot. Juan Diego at once went to the Bishop, who to use an Americanism, “didn't catch on,” so Juan Diego returned disconsolate, again saw the Virgin and again saw the Bishop, who remarked that he only partially believed the tale, but that at any rate some sign should be brought him, and subsequently the Bishop ordered two of his servants to follow the discredited Juan. They followed him, and lo! and behold! Juan of Tolpetlac vanished from their sight. Juan met the Lady of Guadalupe and told her he 147 had been required to bring some sign of her appearance to the Bishop. She told him to come again, but when he arrived home he found his Uncle, Juan Bernadino, lying ill of a fever, called by the Indians the mellifluous name of cocolixtl. Juan, the younger, went for a doctor and on his way he met the Lady of Guadalupe, who told him his Uncle was cured, and bade him pluck flowers off the barren hill where never flowers grew before, and give them to the Bishop as a sign. Juan did so, and marvellous to relate, a spring of water gushed from where the Lady of Guadalupe stood, and her picture, beautifully painted appeared on Juan's zareppa, and the Bishop placed it in its frame, where it now is. Juan returning home, found Uncle all right.

This is the story; you may believe it or not as you like. I did not see the picture, for the simple fact the doors were shut; and as it lay between waiting two hours in a hot sun to 148 see a picture which was probably not dissimilar to scores of others and returning to Mexico for dinner, I chose the latter. The spring of water marking the spot where Juan cut the flowers is there, and remarkably good water it is.

A magnificent chapel, the Capilla del Cerrito was built over it by Cristobal de Aquirre in order to celebrate the vision every 12th December. Near here is an extraordinary looking structure—a ship's mast and sails, enclosed in stone, and dedicated to the Virgin of Guadalupe by some mariners, thankful for their escape from shipwreck off the coast of Vera Cruz.

One of the principal sights we looked forward to was a bull fight. A description of a bull fight has been written so often I had not intended to say much about it, but as two or three

people have told me since my return that they thought the bulls fought each other, it is as well to remove such erroneous impressions.

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For a week before the great event the walls were covered with huge posters stating that the fight would take place at Tacubuya, just outside the town, in the old bull ring, as bull fights are illegal, strange to say, within the city boundaries, The proprietors of the ring announced that at great difficulty and enormous expense they had procured six arrogant and ferocious bulls from a famous frontier herd; that these bulls would fight till the death. Then followed the names of the Toreadores, Picadores, and others, who guaranteed to give the original entertainment, as given at Madrid. In fact, we were to have the whole bag of tricks, and no shuffling.

We hired a sort of closed landau, in the Plaza Major, drawn by mules, and started off with two individuals on the box. I was at a loss to to account for the presence of the extra lacquey, but unhappily soon discovered, One man was to drive, the other had his pocket full of stones 150 to urge the mules to greater exertions. It was a most jumpy drive. The holes and ruts defy description, and by way of strengthening our nerves a large mule cart of “paeons” upset just in front of us, squashing the life out of half a dozen miserable wretches by the heavy cart falling on them. But such is the indifference of the Mexican to suffering that, though there were plenty of men about, no one moved a hand to help them, and had we not rushed to their aid they would have been there to-day. Then our mules, with their innate obstinacy, would not pass the fallen animals, and a gay party of Mexicans had to attach their lassoes to our trap, and pull us along.

Have any of you been in the long valley at Aldershot, or watched the guns at a sham fight at Cobham. If you have you may have a faint idea of what tortures we went through before. arriving at the arena. We charged great dykes, bounded over fallen trees,took bridges like country 151 stiles, being thrown first to one side of the carriage then to the other. I never was in such a funk in all my life; and all the time our footman kept up a volley

of stones and oaths at the mules! Of course, had we known better we should have ridden like every one else. There were hundreds of silver-bedizened Mexicans on horseback, in all their tawdry finery, on their way to the fight.

At last we got to the ring—a huge arena, the seats being arranged in the same way as at a circus, but with a strong palisade round to prevent the bulls getting out, and then a second one with a rope on the top, outside that. The exterior resembled the hoardings of an agricultural show. After providing our coachman and mule stimulator the wherewithal to buy some liquid, we disposed ourselves to see what was to be seen. The crowd gradually thickened, though the show did not begin till four o'clock. The seats were of different prices, and, as there is 152 no roof, the dearest ones are those in the shade, whilst the crowd sit in the sun, where the seats were all occupied.

It made a very pretty sight, with the Mexicans in their picturesque clothes. There must have been some four or five thousand persons present, with a good sprinkling of women. It was a good natured crowd, as crowds who have had their dinner and lots to drink often are; and it beguiled its time in chaffing and smoking till the fun should begin. At times a, whole row of Mexican swells, sitting on the barricade, would go heels up, as some wag slackened the rope they held on to. This would produce a roar of derision from the opposition benches—the democracy in the sun. Then a little bird flew into the middle of the ring, and frightened to death at the waving of hats if it attempted to fly out, suffered itself to be pelted with sticks and stones. The savage yell that went up from those three thousand throats when 153 some one killed it with an orange, showed the blood-thirsty nature of the assembly.

But at last the crowd gets really impatient, and the appearance of a regimental band is greeted with cheers and shouts for El Toro. At last a pair of doors are thrown open, the band strikes up that charming old Toreador tune, and in marches the little gallant band, in half sections, led by the senior Toreador, followed by the Picadores on horseback, and the men to lasso the bulls; then lastly the gaily caparisoned mules which are to pull away

the dead beasts. None of your Mexican shuffling in this band but fine, tall, well-made men, active as cats, and with muscles like prize fighters', yet with a jaunty step and head erect—such good-looking men, with a devil-may-care expression, still stern and slightly anxious. They cross the ring and march to the judge's box. It reminds one of the old gladiators, “Ave Cæsar, morituri te salutant.” Then they dispose of themselves 154 evidently in well arranged positions, and all eyes are turned to a little door at one side of the ring. It opens, and urged on from behind, a small sturdy active black bull bounds out, stimulated by receiving two darts, with iron spikes in them, in his back. These darts have white rosettes, and are always shoved into the bull as he enters the ring by way, I suppose, of making him come in with a little spirit.

But the little black bull stops in spite of the stimulant; he doesn't like the look of things. This is different from his quiet life at home.

Who are those gay-looking tormentors? What is this enormous crowd? And still further—what are those nasty things sticking in his back? Even branding at his home on the frontier is different to this. Such a scene at a “round up” is quite unknown, and after a kick or two he makes up his mind to seek egress where he came in. In vain do the Matadores 155 tempt him to charge with the variegated shawls. In vain do the Picadores stand temptingly in front of him. No; he has quite made up his mind to “quit,” as our Yankee friends say; but how? He runs round the ring looking for the door, and then you feel the temper of the crowd.

They have come for blood. They have paid to see blood; and blood they must have. They don't want to see a bull run round and round a ring. Loud are the cries for “El Lasso.”

Matadores, Picadores, and all try hard to get their bull to toy with them. But he won't have it at any price; and Cæsar has to give the signal.

Then two elaborately dressed Mexican Vaqueros canter out, and lasso the animal in an inimitable manner, one by the horns, the other by the hind legs; and he is pulled out of the arena!

We are somewhat disappointed. Is this the far-famed Spanish Bull Fight? If so we 156 will climb down, and, risking the terrors of the drive, go home and spend our afternoon under the Portales, or even in the Museo Nacional, and yet, perhaps, this was only a bad bull. We will stop and see another. We have a short interval, the hand strikes up, the doors fly open, and with a kick and a plunge, in comes another bull—a sturdy roan chap, a sporting looking customer. He regards all for a second, and then gives a toss of his head which brings a cheer from the spectators. Yes! We shall have a bit of fun with this chap. He cheerfully responds to the blandishments of the gay colored shawl fluttered in front of his eyes. This part of the performance is perhaps the prettiest,—to see the bull attacking the man who so skilfully mocks him with his shawl. If only the bull could get past this vexatious shawl, and give the man a good toss, what a gratified howl would go up from the crowd; but the Matador is too skilful; sometimes in front, sometimes behind, 157 turning and twisting, he chaffs the bull, till he is tired, and another one takes his place; but this man has not such an easy time. Our little roan friend has had enough of this tomfoolery, and makes several determined dashes, compelling the matador to seek refuge behind the little wooden shields built round the ring. A third man has a try, and now it gets quite exciting. The bull chases him round the ring once and finally crosses in full pursuit and charges to some purpose. The man just manages to jump over the barricade, and the bull goes with a crash against the timbers, turning round only to find himself with a Picador on an old gray horse. The Picadores, as I ought to have explained before, are mounted on the most miserable old quads, bought for a few dollars apiece. They are shielded with leather, and in their old ramshackle gear present a queer contrast to their beautifully dressed companions.

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The Picadores themselves are armed with a long pole, with an iron spike at the end, not so much to attack the bull, as to receive the shock of his charge. The roan has an exciting tussle with the gray, and finally knocks him end over end,the laughing Picadores pretending to enjoy it. But there is no time to enquire after this Picador, for the bull catches sight of another, who resists his first charge successfully, but is bowled off, and though eventually getting up is made to canter round the ring with his entrails trailing on the ground. A third Picador has a go, and for some time succeeds in keeping on his legs, but the bull gets his horns fairly under him and carries horse and man with a terrible crash against the barricade. The horse is killed and the Picador is hurt, whilst the Matadores strive to get the bull's attention from their fallen companion by trailing their flags under his notice.

The excitement is intense. “El Toro!” 159 “El Toro!” Every one applauds the bull. No one cares for the men; and the culminating point is reached when a Matador trips up and falls, to be gored by the infuriated beast. But alas for the blood-thirsty crowd, the bull does not get home; it only rips his breeches off. Oh! if only that man had been gored! The spectators would have indeed considered that they had not invested their dollars in vain. But pending some one killed they have to put up with torn breeches; yet even this raises them to the highest pinnacle of pleasure, and loud cheers greet the trumpets when they sound the “Banderillas.”

The banderillas are sharp barbs, gaily decorated with festoons and flowers of coloured papers. One of the leading bull-fighters takes one in each hand, and places himself in front of his antagonist, who makes a dash at him. This man, who appears to be popular with the crowd, gets the bull to pass under his arm, and plants a 160 banderilla in each shoulder, which feat, if he does it cleverly, is greeted with applause. Then another pair is planted in.

Each movement of the bull drives them in, and goads him to fury, and he gallops round the ring in the maddest anguish, taunted by the Picadores, chased first by one man, then by another; anon making a successful charge at horse, which he gores in the most savage

manner and then, narrowly missing a man, who slips behind a screen, all the people are in the bull's favour. How is it we love the animal we wish to kill? All our sympathies are with the bull, and yet we cannot satisfy those sympathies unless we kill the animal we so admire!

But this tormenting cannot go on for ever. The bull is getting pumped, and his attacks are less vigorous. He stands and glares at his opponents, inviting attack. He is too blown to follow them, but stands, covered with blood and foam, prepared, if he can only get the chance, to 161 have a terrible reckoning with either man or beast whom be can catch.

The crowd cheer; Caesar gives the word; the trumpets sound, and this brave bull must die. The head Matador advances, with a long sword in one hand, and a wand with a parti-colored ribbon in the other. He advances by himself. The maimed horses have been dragged off the field; his companions are standing round the arena, and he knows well that he has only two inches wherein to place his weapon to succeed, and if he fails the jeers of four thousand people will sound in his ears. He taunts the bull with the muleta, which causes him to charge, and the Matador, with a sharp turn of his wrist, runs the sword in that difficult spot between the point of the shoulder and the shoulder blade. The bull stops, staggers, blood gushes from his nostrils, the band strikes up a triumphant refrain, the other bull fighters dance a mocking dance before the poor brute, 162 and this good, plucky bull falls down, and is dragged out of the ring by a pair of mules, whilst the crowd discuss the fight, smoke, and drink.

The fights that follow vary. Sometimes it is “El Lasso,” the sign of a bad bull, sometimes “El Toro.” We leave shortly, and mindful of the amount of liquor our Jehu must have imbibed, and the stones the flunkey must have collected, walk home in the evening to Mexico city.

The next day we start on our journey to the Tropics. It is necessary to get up at four o'clock in the morning to catch this tropical train. One of the advantages about Mexico is, that you start in the morning, reach Vera Cruz in the evening, enjoy the tropical scenery, and

should you feel a touch of malaria, or get afraid of yellow jack, you can, in twelve hours, be back in the Terra fria.

I am not sure if I previously explained that 163 Mexico is divided into three climatic zones; *i.e.* the Terra fria, at the top of the mountain range, the Terra templada, the moderate climate, halfway down; and the Terra caliente, or the Tropics.

The railway we take to descend to the Terra caliente is the Mexican National Railway. It was made by English contractors, and many of the drivers, guards, and foremen on the line are English. It is curious to see the English carriages after the Yankee cars; but this is a day of curiosities. What are all those soldiers for, all huddled up in a cattle truck? They are the guard to protect the train against banditti, though I should imagine they would all lie down on the floor and cry, if one real fierce-looking brigand appeared—such as one sees in certain strong domestic pieces at second-rate theatres. A favourite plan of the Mexican brigand is to uncouple the last cars, and then pillage them. To all appearance the country 164 must be in a most dangerous state. Lines of guards surround the train at every station, acting, after the departure of the train, as escorts to the diligences that come to meet us at every little station.

A few hours after leaving Mexico we go through the most valuable agricultural country. Here are all the large Pulque (pulky) Farms. The pulque is the popular beverage in Mexico. In color it resembles milk, and has a taste not unlike sour yeast. It is slightly medicinal, and is said to be very wholesome. As you may imagine, it is quite an acquired taste, and forms the only drink of the middle and lower classes. It is procured from the aloe, or what is commonly called, I think, in England, the century plant. It is planted in long rows, with geometrical precision. A plant, taking many years to ripen, remains for a certain period in good condition for tapping, and then dies away. On the outside cover of this book there is an 165 engraving of a Mexican extracting the juice from the aloe. He has a long gourd with a hole at each end. He cuts out the centre of the plant, and sticks the pointed end of the gourd into its heart. He then applies his mouth to the other end, and sucks till

he fills his gourd with liquid, afterwards emptying it into the sheepskin on his back. It is then taken to Mexico, allowed to foment, and is fit for drinking, but keeps fresh only a few days. I cannot say that I cared much for it, though a drink, called pulque con pino (that is, flavoured with the juice of the pine-apple) is excellent.

We pass for miles through these valuable farms. You may form some idea of the quantity drunk when I tell you two long trains go to Mexico daily with pulque. This drink is only, I think, to be found in the city. It is certainly not to be had in Central or Northern Mexico, though there they have a drink called mescal, 166 concocted from some species of cactus, and poisonous stuff it is too.

The next six hours' ride is too terrible to describe. The dirt was fearful, compared to which the dust on the plains of Utah was nothing, and we are glad to get to a really comfortable luncheon station, where we have a capital lunch, and prepare for the wonders to come.

Shortly after leaving the plateau we pass through a tunnel and commence our descent of the mountain. We turn a corner and in a moment the whole scene bursts upon us, and we gaze on the marvellous sight, fascinated in the same way as when first one sees Niagara. We are on a narrow ledge on the side of the mountain, and see sheer down four thousand feet into the most beautiful valley. The sides of the canons are clothed with the most extraordinarily luxuriant vegetation. Far down below us, we see a little white glistening 167 church and houses, the size of a pin's head; whilst ten miles across, the lovely mountains of the Sierra Madre tower up in clear deep blue masses set off by an exquisite color of light and shade, only possible in such a climate.

The temperature gets hotter and hotter, and the vegetation more and more striking the lower we get. The people are even more picturesque than their brethren in the Terra Fria. We cross fairy bridges over brilliantly clear little mountain streams, a hundred feet beneath, and one trembles to think how almost a puff of wind would send us tumbling down into that smiling valley below. After an hour of the most unsurpassed scenery we

cross a terribly narrow rocky gorge which contrasts strangely with the brilliant scene we have just passed.

At last we reach the bottom after apparently endless twistings and turnings, and find ourselves in the loveliest village it is 168 possible to imagine. This is Orizaba, where we determine to pass the night.

Can you imagine a little town hidden amid the mountains, which rise on each side, clothed in that lovely green that is only seen in the tropics? Conceive yourself to be in a vast conservatory, where broad leaved palm plants and tree ferns of various shades of green, grow together in the most luxuriant fashion, relieved here and there by a dash of gorgeous scarlet. Carry your eye up to the sky line, and see how the light and shadow varies from the most tender blue and then deepens into a still more exquisite violet, till the color fades away in the distance, and your eye lights upon Orizaba's snow-capped peak, which forms the crowning point of this charming picture—a different picture to what we have ever seen before;—different from the stern grandeur of the mighty canons of the Rockies;—different from the sun setting, blood-red over the glorious majesty of 169 Mont Blanc;—different from the enchanting views one sees in England, of the smoke circling away from the red roofs of a peaceful English village in the early morning, or the sweet calm of a Scottish lake; surely of all beautiful scenes, Orizaba is the most beautiful.—A lovely place to stay in; the more we see of it, the more charming it appears—its church, its plaza, its groves of coffee, bananas, and oranges, all wild, all natural, all rank and green and uncultivated. At last we think we have lit on the earthly Paradise; but, alas, we are soon to be undeceived! Some man wiser than his fellows wrote a too true line. It is old, and it runs—

If she be not fair to me, What care I how fair she be?

Probably the poet only referred to some capricious lady of his heart, yet it applied only too much to my new sweetheart Orizaba.

One reads daily, in our papers a notice which cautions us against a disease that is 170 stealing upon us; it treats of pains between the shoulders, pain in the side, and a variety of other hideous symptoms, which, if not attended to, end in insanity and subsequent death.

The advertisement is usually headed, “One bottle did it.” Oh, if I had only had “one bottle,” or even half a bottle, I might have continued my tale. I would have taken you to Vera Cruz, only twenty miles off. I would have told you of Vanilla and Cochineal, of monkeys and parrots, and then of Cuba and cigars; but I hadn't the bottle, and I had the pain in the side and between the shoulders, and I came to the conclusion that the Tropics were not good for the liver, and that the fair Orizaba was most unfair to me. It is no use hiding it, visions of vomito—in other words, yellow jack—appeared before my eyes in its most horrible shapes. I never was in such a solid funk before in all my life, and without much difficulty I persuaded myself that it would be far nicer to take the overland route to Texas.

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So I started back the next day to Old Mexico,—back without a mishap this time, through the cactus-covered country to El Paso, then over the sunset track in Texas—a long, dusty, weary journey, relieved only by the brief excitement of a herd of antelopes or a prairie fire, —or by the sight of the magnificently weird passes of the Del Norte at night, the gloomy heights of Eagle Pass lit by a Texan moon, being a something never to be forgotten.

On the sixth day we cross the mighty Mississippi. We get just a glimpse of New Orleans through the fog before passing across the swamps and pine forests of the South,—but only a glimpse; and we spend the whole day passing woods, and swamps, and cotton fields, and listen to stories of the darkies we see picking cotton, and the past glories of the old slave days.

As I was in a great hurry to get back to the old country, I did not stop, despite Florida 172 and its oranges, then in full swing; besides I hated fried chicken, and colored folk make me sick, as the “down Easter” says. Louisiana, Alabama, Virginia, appealed in vain.

Washington might have looked like Warrington or have smelt as much as Widnes. All I wanted was to get back to the old country. How strange it is that when one is far away one imagines home to be the only doctor that can cure you of all your cares and ills, and you get there, only to find that after all you are disappointed, and perhaps wish yourself back in the place that lately you had been so heartily cursing.

Eight days and nights without leaving the cars, brings one to Washington, and on the ninth we cross the Hudson and land again in New York—not the damp, sultry New York we left, but dry New York, with sleighs, and the thermometer at zero.

I have heard that it is as difficult to end a 173 story as to begin it; yet when there is nothing more to tell, where can be the difficulty? My unambitious little tale is told; nothing more remains to be said, save the final dinner at The Hoffmann, save the final bottle of “pop”—a useless waste of gold when one thinks of the apoplectic scene that must be enacted before the North German Lloyd, best of all lines for cuisine and appointments, lands us in London.

If I have interested, amused—nay, even bored my friends, by getting them to read this my plain unvarnished tale, my ambition is attained.

THE END.

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